

THE GREEKS OF VENICE, 1498–1600

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THE GREEKS OF VENICE, 1498–1600

Immigration, Settlement, and Integration

by

Ersie C. Burke



BREPOLS

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CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	vii
Colour Plates	ix
Acknowledgements	xiii
Abbreviations, Usage, Names, and Dates	xv
Introduction	xvii

Part I. Arriving and Settling

Chapter 1. A Venetian Setting	3
Chapter 2. New Ties and a New Community	23
Chapter 3. The World of Work	65

Part II. Becoming Venetian

Chapter 4. A Community's Institutions	113
Chapter 5. Venetian Greeks?	143
Chapter 6. Defining Greekness	183
Conclusion	211
Bibliography	215
Index	235

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Plates

Plate 1. The Manessi Icon. Church of San Giorgio dei Greci.	ix
Plate 2. The Mormori Icon. Museum of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Icons, Scuoletta di San Nicolò dei Greci.	x–xi
Plate 3. Demetri di Teodoro Paleologo. Detail from the St Petersburg Gospel Book.	xii
Plate 4. The Winged Lion of St Mark above the front door of a private home, Monemvasia, Greece.	xii

Figures

Figure 3.1: A <i>stratioto</i>	104
Figure 4.1: Bas relief, St George slaying the dragon. Venice, Calle dei Greci.	121
Figure 4.2: The Metropolitans of Philadelphia 1577–1820. Courtyard, San Giorgio dei Greci.	135
Figure 5.1: Palma il Giovane, Cristo Pantocrator. Scuoletta di San Nicolò dei Greci.	173
Figure 5.2: The Manessi Icon. Church of San Giorgio dei Greci.	177
Figure 5.3: The Mormori Icon. Museum of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Icons, Scuoletta di San Nicolò dei Greci.	178
Figure 5.4: Demetri di Teodoro Paleologo. Detail from the St. Petersburg Gospel Book.	180
Figure 6.1: Extract from Census, Santa Maria Formosa, August 1593.	186

Figure 6.2: Extract from Census, Sant' Antonin, 1592–93.	186
Figure 6.3: Extract from Census, San Martin, 9 April 1594.	187
Figure 6.4: Extract from Census, Santa Trinità parish, 1593.	188
Figure 6.5: Extract from Census, San Giovanni Nuovo parish, 30 November 1593.	190
Figure 6.6: Extract from Census, San Severo parish, October 1593.	191
Figure 7.1: The Winged Lion of St Mark above the front door of a private home, Monemvasia, Greece.	210

Maps

Map 1: The Venetian Sea Empire	2
Map 2: The <i>sestiere</i> of Castello and its Parishes	20

Tables

Table 1.1: The Chronology of Empire	11
Table 1.2: The Greek Homelands of the <i>Stato da Mar</i>	18
Table 1.3: Greek Residency by Parish	21
Table 2.1: Greek Households 1592–94 Census	26
Table 2.2: Marriage Patterns 1498–1600	33
Table 3.1: Greek Occupations 1498–1600	67
Table 3.2: The Artisan Professions	70
Table 3.3: The Maritime Professions	75
Table 5.1: Burial Preferences 1498–1600	158

COLOUR PLATES



Plate 1. The Manessi Icon. Church of San Giorgio dei Greci.
Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia.





Plate 2.
The Mormori Icon. Museum of
Byzantine and Post-Byzantine
Icons, Scuoletta di San Nicolò
dei Greci. Istituto Ellenico di
Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini
di Venezia



Plate 3.
Demetri di Teodoro Paleologo.
Detail from the St Petersburg
Gospel Book. National Library
of Russia, St Petersburg.

Plate 4.
The Winged Lion of
St Mark above the front
door of a private home,
Monemvasia, Greece.
Photo: John Burke.



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ABBREVIATIONS, USAGE, NAMES, AND DATES

The following abbreviations appear throughout the text and the footnotes:

ASV	Archivio di Stato di Venezia
AAIEV	Archivio Antico dell' Istituto Ellenico di Venezia
ACPV	Archivio della Curia Patriarcale di Venezia
b./bb	busta/buste
fol./fols	folio/folios
fasc.	fascicolo
mv	<i>modo veneto</i>
reg.	registro

Greek works and titles in the Bibliography have been cited by their Greek titles followed by the English translation in square brackets. I have used the English short title throughout in the footnotes.

Venetian dialect is quite distinct and shares many words with Greek and other languages of the Mediterranean region. For the sake of clarity, I have translated some of the more unique Venetian words, expressions, and names into modern Italian in the first instance. With direct quotes I have kept to the original spelling but added modern punctuation and capitalization.

I have avoided using contemporary terms when discussing religious differences. There are sound historical reasons for this. Distinctions and differences between the Catholic and Orthodox churches were not clearly set and defined until the late seventeenth century; hence, people did not place emphasis on them like we do today. Greeks did not refer to their faith as 'orthodox' but as the Christianity of the Greek rite (*rito Greco*). Neither was the term 'catholic' used often except in its original meaning. Venetians and Greeks used the same religious terms to describe the rituals of the faith, as well as themselves and oth-

ers. The distinctions then were between *rito Greco* and *rito Latino*, and these terms are used throughout this book.

I have used the Venetian spelling of Greek personal names throughout, since this is how they appear in the documentation.

Venetians and Greeks used Italian and Greek versions of place names, often interchangeably and in the same document. For the sake of consistency, the Venetian version of the place name is used throughout. The table below is a list of place names with their Greek, Venetian, and English equivalents.

Greek	Italian (Venetian dialect)	English
Evvia	Negroponte	Euboea
Kefalonia	Cefalonia/Cephalonia/Zefalonia	Cephalonia
Kérkyra	Corfu/Corcira	Corfu
Khania	Cania	Chaniá
Koroni	Coron	Koroni
Kriti	Creta/Candia (island/capital city)	Crete
Kypros	Cypro/Cipro	Cyprus
Kíthera	Cerigo	Kythera
Leukada	Santa Maura/Leucas	Leucas
Methóne	Modon	Methóni
Monemvasiá	Monemvasia/Malvassia	Monemvasiá
Naupaktos	Lepanto/Naupacto	Naupaktos
Nauplion	Napoli di Romania	Návyplion
Zakynthos	Zante/Zakyntho/Iacinto	Zakynthos

The Venetian year began on 1 March. All dates have been changed to the Gregorian calendar. In direct quotes, the Venetian date (*modo veneto* or *mv*) follows in brackets.

INTRODUCTION

This book is about the Greeks of Venice in the period 1498–1600. It examines why they left their homelands and how they established new personal and corporate structures in Venice. It traces their evolution from immigrants to permanent residents and as such examines the process of their integration into a new, wider, and more diverse society. Their story is neither new nor unique. People have always emigrated for any number of reasons: better economic opportunities, escape from wars and oppression, for family reunification, even for adventure. Some are temporary visitors, others settle permanently. Some move willingly, others are forced out of their homelands by circumstances beyond their control. Whatever the reasons, immigration is a double-edged sword because, while it offers people a chance for renewal, it also means the loss of homeland, family, and long-held customs and traditions.

Immigrants contribute to the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the host community, but they can also create tensions. Newcomers face many obstacles in their adopted home, such as finding adequate housing and work, learning a new language, and adapting to local environments. To overcome these difficulties, they re-establish the familiar through associations like clubs, churches, and temples, places where they can gather with compatriots to share experiences, meet new arrivals and socialize in a more familiar environment. For its part, the host community needs to absorb the new arrivals quickly to avoid friction between locals and newcomers. Given all of these factors then, what made Venice the preferred destination of large numbers of Greek immigrants, and how did the experience of immigration impact on their lives, their beliefs, their customs and rituals? What effect did their arrival have on Venetians? Was there initial animosity towards them, and, if so, how did they overcome this? This book examines and attempts to answer questions like these.

From the earliest days of European exploration, the countries of the ‘New World’ offered social conditions and economic opportunities that encouraged

immigration on a large scale. Many of the foundation myths of these countries are based on the notion that anyone prepared to work hard, fit into the new society, and make positive contributions to it can succeed because the restrictions of the 'Old World' such as class, status, and entrenched interests are irrelevant in the new. The period after World War II saw increased immigration within Europe, mainly the poor and unemployed from southern countries moving to the industrial north. The northerners needed these workers, but they did not intend for them to stay and in many instances discouraged them from doing so. At the same time, with the break-up of their empires in the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa, former colonial powers experienced a different type of immigration. One was of European colonizers returning to the home country, even though for those who had been away for decades or generations, home was an unknown, if not a foreign place. The other group was the 'ex-imperials', subjects from the former colonies seeking greater opportunities in the 'mother country'. In both cases, the arrival of these outsiders caused social disruption, put a strain on national economies, housing, and social services, and forced locals to confront their own racial and cultural prejudices. Imperial powers were obliged to honour rights given or implied to their former subjects, including the right to live in the 'mother country'. They also had to find ways to incorporate the newly arrived without sacrificing local and national cultural values and without demanding newcomers and returnees leave their identities at the point of entry.

Earlier societies faced similar problems and developed their own ways of dealing with immigration issues. At times newcomers were quickly integrated into the host community, while at others they were segregated from the local population. Some societies were tolerant of difference while others actively persecuted those whose religious or political beliefs did not reflect their own. This book looks at the way one early modern state, the Republic of Venice, dealt with the issues associated with immigration, settling, and integration. It is a history complicated by factors that were uniquely Venetian. The Republic's economy was based on trade, and its people could be found in the port cities of Northern and Western Europe and throughout the Levant, the Byzantine and later Ottoman Empires, and in North Africa. Venice administered a large land empire, the *Terraferma*, which stretched across northern Italy to the borders of the Duchy of Milan. Its sea empire, the *Stato da Mar* was a source of manpower for its fleets, and it provided an industrial working class for its shipyards and fighters for its armies. Venetian possessions were not as extensive as those of the older Roman and Byzantine empires because the Republic was not interested in acquiring territories that did not serve its commercial, maritime, and security needs. In other ways, however, the Venetian model adopted the traits of all suc-

cessful imperial powers: a common political entity tempered by local custom, a military largely drawn from subject territories, an economic and fiscal model geared to the well-being of the Republic, and defined rights and privileges for both native-born and imperial subjects. Among these was the right to freely emigrate to Venice or any other parts of its empire, and many people took this up, as the two accounts that follow show.

During the 1540 Ottoman siege of Napoli di Romania, Manoli Soffianò and his father fled that city on a ship bound for Crete. Unfortunately, the ship was attacked by three Turkish galleys, and all its passengers and crew were captured and sold into slavery. Manoli spent eight years in captivity, finally escaping in early 1549. He did not go to Crete, however. Instead Manoli set out for Venice, 'this most holy and blessed city, which with much piety and charity provided to those in need, but especially those like me who served her and who always did so with the greatest loyalty'.¹ Soffianò spent the rest of his life there, working as a sailor on the fleets. In his later years he petitioned for and was awarded a pension of three ducats a month 'to survive in this, my miserable life'.² In the same year that Manoli Soffianò fled Napoli di Romania, another young man, Elia di Nicolò, came to Venice to work in his uncle's drapery shop. Elia, who did not identify his ethnicity or homeland, was sent to the city by his father to learn the drapery trade and to help out his uncle Zorzi, his father's brother, who had fallen on hard times. By his own account, Elia worked very hard to learn the trade, toiling long hours and travelling far and wide. Together he and his uncle rebuilt the business so that it became a commercial and financial success that promptly met its taxation responsibilities. In April 1581 forty years after his arrival in Venice, Elia submitted a petition for citizenship *de intus et extra*.³

Manoli's and Elia's stories were typical of the experiences of many immigrants. The movement of people from one place to another was fraught with difficulty, danger, and uncertainty. Sea voyagers faced the constant threat of pirate and enemy attacks and enslavement, while overland routes did not offer

¹ 'questa Santissima et Benedetta Città, nella qual con tanta pietà, et misericordia vien provisto a quelli, quali ne hanno bisogno, ma specialmente a quelli che sono stato al suo servitio come da me è sta fatto sempre con grandissima fedeltà'; from Manoli Soffianò's 1577 petition for assistance: ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 6, fol. 201r, 16 November 1577.

² Soffianò's life was not quite as miserable as he made it out to be, but exaggeration was common in petitions. The process, form, and style of petition writing is discussed in Chapter 5.

³ ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 7, fol. 11r, 20 April 1581. There were several levels of citizenship, and immigrants as well as foreigners who met residency and fiscal requirements could apply. See the discussion of citizenship procedures in Chapter 1.

greater security or comfort. Despite this, people continued to travel. Venice was a popular destination because it served as a departure and arrival point for diplomats, spies, soldiers, merchants, pilgrims—in fact anyone making their way to or from the eastern Mediterranean. The city attracted people from its land and sea territories, the Levant, the Ottoman Empire, and throughout Europe. Immigration rates remained steady in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and then accelerated in the sixteenth. This last wave created new problems for the state. How it went about resolving them is one of the on-going themes discussed in this volume.

Venetians had a fairly open-minded attitude to newcomers. Jews from the *Terraferma* sought and were given temporary asylum in the city during the wars of the League of Cambrai (1508–17) and were then allowed to become permanent residents. ‘Foreigners’ — that is, people from other parts of Italy, Western and Central Europe, and the Ottoman lands — lived in the city on a permanent and semi-permanent basis. Padua, with its famous university, attracted thousands of students from Italy and other parts of Europe. In other words, there had always been significant numbers of foreigners in Venice and its territories. The largest group to settle permanently in the city were the Greeks from the *Stato da Mar*.⁴ What attracted them to Venice, and what problems did they face when they got there? Who helped them settle? What contribution did they make to the life of the city? What did Venetians learn from outsiders, and what did outsiders learn from Venetians? How did this small city, confined by geography and not enclosed by walls, anticipate and deal with the influx of newcomers? How did it maintain social, economic, and political harmony and a reputation for religious tolerance in an age that was not noted for the acceptance of the ‘other’? Finally, what can an immigration experience of five hundred years ago tell us about immigration and multiculturalism today? These are some of the issues addressed throughout this book.

One of the first things that struck me when I began working on the Greeks of Venice was how little was known about them and about the lives they led. Earlier histories focused almost exclusively on social and occupational elites and the preservation of identity, language, and faith in an often hostile environment. Two events informed this earlier approach: the expression of Greek identity through the establishment of a Greek church and confraternity (*scuola*) in Venice, and the battle to secure religious recognition from the state and the Roman church.

⁴ Greek immigration levels were steady yet low in the late Middle Ages but increased from the late fifteenth century. Imhaus, *Le minoranze orientali a Venezia*, examines why Greeks, Albanians, and Dalmatians moved to Venice in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The community's permanent institutions, the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci and the church of San Giorgio dei Greci, received considerable scholarly attention because of their role in the community and because they were seen as expressions of 'Greekness'. The same themes were applied to early modern Greek communities outside Venice, like Naples, Trieste, and Livorno.⁵ With regards to Venice, Greek and non-Greek historians produced a large body of work dedicated to the community with the focus on the church, the scuola, and the elite. The latter included wealthy merchant families, humanist scholars, printers and publishers, commanders of the light horse (the *capi dei stratioti*), and a handful of Byzantine notables who had emigrated to the city before or immediately after the fall of Constantinople in 1453.⁶ These groups made up less than ten per cent of the Greek population, yet they have attracted considerable attention from historians because of their success, their stature, and their presumed impact on Venetian and Greek society. There were joint commercial ventures between wealthy merchants and privileged Venetians; humanists worked as teachers, writers, copyists, interpreters, and secretaries, while the *capi dei stratioti* fought Venice's wars on the *Terraferma* and in other parts of Italy and defended *Stato da Mar*. Wealthy civilian and military families had friends among the Venetian ruling classes, and their daughters were sought out as marriage partners for patrician and *cittadini originarii* sons.⁷ In the end, the success of this elite minority created the impression that Greeks were a privileged people with easy access to the upper echelons of Venetian society. The reality was quite different.

Earlier historians also focused on Greek successes and the preservation of ethnic and religious identity in the face of the intransigence of the Catholic Church, colonial subjugation, and the experience of immigration. Consequently, Greeks were portrayed as victims, survivors, and, ultimately, victors. Feeding this approach was a strong belief in the continuity and endurance of Greek national identity. Even today, Greek historical writing is constantly under pressure to remain within the confines of nationalist ideology.

⁵ For studies of other Greek communities in Italy, see Geanakoplos, *Interaction of the Sibling Byzantine and Western Cultures*; Manoussacas, 'The Large Greek Communities of Italy'; Nikas, 'Greeks in Naples'; Porfyriou, 'La diaspora greca in Italia'; Harris, 'La comunità greca e i suoi avamposti nell' Europa settentrionale'.

⁶ On Greek elites see, Nicol, *The Byzantine Lady*, pp. 96–107; Geanakoplos, *Greek Scholars in Venice*; Harris, 'Common Language and the Common Good'; Burke, 'Surviving Exile'; Layton, *The Sixteenth Century Greek Book in Italy*; Layton, 'Notes on some Printers and Publishers'; Ploumidis, 'Le topografie greche di Venezia'.

⁷ Burke, 'Our Daughters and Our Future'; Burke, 'Surviving Exile', pp. 113–26.

The reasons for this approach lie in the origins of the modern Greek state, a nation founded in 1832 and based on the then-new ideology of nationalism that incorporated a romanticism about the past, specifically the ancient Greek past. Modern Greek nationalism manifested itself through what was seen as the strength and perseverance of the Greek people in maintaining faith, language, culture, and tradition in the face of four hundred years of diaspora and Ottoman oppression. The survival of Greek identity *despite* Ottoman rule, coupled with the unwavering belief in ancient Greece as the cradle of Western civilization, became the basis of scholarship. From there, it was only a small step to paint all other conquerors (Romans, Franks, Venetians) like the Ottomans: oppressors of the spirit against whom the notion of the invincibility of Greekness was maintained and which in the end was given expression through the creation of the Greek state.⁸ The words used today to identify Turkish and Venetian rule, *Turkokratia* and *Venetokratia*, contain an implied negative view of Greece's former overlords and reflect a particular view of imperial regimes, which are after all the occupation of many people by a powerful few. Interestingly, the Greek empires of antiquity are not viewed in the same negative light; instead, they are seen as bringing civilization to 'barbarians'. In the same way, the Byzantine period is not *Byzantinokratia*, since Greeks appropriated the Byzantine Empire as their own, and hence they have taken a benign approach to *its* imperialism.

Nationalist historians, however, also produced important research and published a great number of primary sources, all the while remaining within the confines of nationalist historiography. An example of this approach is found in the work of Sofia Antoniadi. Writing in the late 1950s at the height of the Cyprus crisis, Antoniadi attempted to use the distant past to justify the present. Referring to late sixteenth-century Venice and the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci, she pointed to the significant presence of Cypriots on the *Banca* (the scuola's governing board) and among the general membership. She especially noted the large number of Cypriot names in the church's book of prayers compiled in 1640. Linking these examples of Cypriot presence from the past, she came to the conclusion that they presented living proof of the enduring Greekness of Cyprus.⁹ Translated to Venice, this approach meant that the city's

⁸ Between 1912 and 1943, the Dodecanese Islands were Italian. They were only turned over to Greece after Italy's capitulation to the Allies in 1943. Nicholas Doumanis found a disconnection between official Greek histories of the islands' Italian period and the memories of local people who, though critical of Fascist Italy's efforts at Italianization, credited the Italians with improving islanders' lives; Doumanis, *Myth and Memory in the Mediterranean*, pp. 1–13.

⁹ Antoniadi, 'The Book of Prayers of St. George of the Greeks', p. 1257. The author clearly

Greeks were unique, exclusive, and separate from mainstream Venetian society. There are several problems with all of this kind of thinking. It does not acknowledge the realities of the immigration experience and the subsequent realignment of identity and community within the new society. It minimizes the effects of centuries of uninterrupted contact among the diverse peoples of the Mediterranean basin and their shared common experiences formed by heritage and environmental constraints.¹⁰ It does not acknowledge the relationship between subject Greeks and Venetians or a shared familiarity through commerce and seafaring. Nationalist dogma is of limited value when dealing with early modern societies.

These earlier studies also placed considerable emphasis on the Turkish threat as an impetus for emigration because it provided an easy explanation as to why Greeks left their homelands. The premise was that as Christians, Greeks did not want to live under Muslim rule. This perception of the Turks as oppressive masters did not acknowledge any positive aspects of Ottoman rule. In reality, the Ottomans were often more tolerant of Greeks and the Greek church and its adherents than Latin Christians.¹¹ Like many imperial powers, the Ottomans adhered to the policy that if the vanquished accepted their rule, the conquered would be treated benignly; if they resisted, destruction and slavery followed. However, fears of the 'terrible Turk' were not just figments of peoples' imaginations. Reports of Ottoman behaviour at Modon in 1500, Nicosia in 1570, and Famagusta in 1571, places where resistance to the Ottomans was intense, served to reinforce the fear of persecution, enslavement, oppression, and death. But emphasizing the Ottoman threat limits the discussion to those forced to emigrate, which then makes it difficult to explain the large numbers of voluntary emigrants from the Ionian Islands and Crete who, for a variety of reasons, chose to emigrate. Regardless of the nature of Venetian rule in their homelands, for the Greek subjects of the *Serenissima*, Venice was the place of natural immigration outside the *patria* because Greeks identified with the city, its authority, and its values.

states her aim in the opening paragraph: to prove, especially to foreigners, that Cyprus was and had always been one of the Greek *patrie* (homelands) and, as such, should now be incorporated into the Greek state.

¹⁰ Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World*.

¹¹ 'In Crete the Ottomans actually restored an Orthodox Archbishopric to the island. By so doing they defended and supported Orthodoxy'; Greene, *A Shared World*, pp. 39–44. Greene also found that there were more conversions to Islam in Crete than any other Greek territory under Ottoman control.

Until recently there has been no systematic study of conditions in the colonies that might provide reasons for increased levels of immigration in the sixteenth century. In fact, an analysis of immigration and settlement, the place of Greeks in Venetian society, their social and working lives, their relations with each other, with other subject people, and with Venetians has been dealt in summary fashion, if at all. Some historians acknowledge the absence of work in this area. In a 1972 study, Georghios Ploumidis observes that the bulk of research on Greeks centred on their ecclesiastical position, that is, on the relationship between the Greek church and the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople, the Holy See, and Venetian religious authorities. While this research added to a greater understanding of the relationship between the Greek and Latin churches in the sixteenth century, it is now time, writes Ploumidis, for scholars to look at other aspects of Greek life in Venice: 'In effect, there have not been studies of the institutions of the community, the commercial activity of its members, their relations with the lands under Venetian and Turkish control and their ties to Italian culture.'¹² Seven years later, Antonios Pardos voiced similar concerns and called for a study into the social world of the Greeks, their relationship with Venetians, their commercial activities, and their place in the wider Venetian community.¹³ Among other things, this book closely examines the areas originally identified by Ploumidis and Pardos over forty years ago.

The Greeks of Venice were a diverse, heterogeneous people who came from many different parts of the Greek-speaking world. The threads that bound them together were a common language (Greek does not have the strong dialectic differences of Italian), a common political heritage, since the majority were *Serenissima* subjects, and, for most, a common faith, the Eastern Christian rite. In all other respects they differed. Each Greek homeland had its own unique customs, traditions, and historical memory — and it is doubtful if antiquity was part of it. Why should it have been? Antiquity was the pagan, which was fine for humanists but had little meaning for good Christian sailors, servants, merchants, and artisans. Venice, on the other hand, was the here and now, the imperial capital that formed the basis of the political, legal, and judicial system under which Greeks lived. What is more, there was no such thing as a single Greek community in Venice. Instead, there were a number of smaller communities based on any one or all of the following: homeland, family, kin, work, neighbourhood, even rite, since not all Greeks were of the Eastern rite.

¹² Ploumidis, 'Considerazioni sulla popolazione greca a Venezia', p. 219.

¹³ Pardos, 'Alphabetical Catalogue of the First Members, Part A', p. 294.

Often these communities worked together to speak with one voice when necessity dictated, like when the time came to establish a *scuola* and build a church. Otherwise, like everyone else, Greeks went their separate ways. Instead of looking at the Greeks as homogenous, unique, and exclusive, this book will show that they were a diverse, open, and inclusive people. Each new wave of immigrants added a new layer of meaning to what it meant to be Greek in a Venetian context, to be a part of a vibrant, dynamic community.

On the basis of abundant documentation, this study addresses questions about immigration, acculturation, and multiculturalism. It looks at who constituted the Greek community and what defined it: a particular locality or a broader world? It examines how Greeks, while different from other local and foreign communities, were nevertheless incorporated into the larger, Venetian one. The existence of many minorities says much about Venetian social and cultural mores. Was this a world where, to paraphrase Philippe de Commynes, most people were foreigners, or was there a distinctive Venetian identity forged by both locals and immigrants?¹⁴ In the end, this is not only a Greek story but a Venetian one as well.

The main purpose of this study is to look at the effects of immigration on both immigrant and host communities. More broadly it strives to place immigration in an historical context by examining the continuities and changes on societies where locals and large numbers of minorities coexisted. The focus is on the Greek–Venetian experience from 1498 to 1600. It was during this period that the Greeks became the largest Christian minority in Venice, and it was at this time that they set up their own formal institutions.¹⁵ From the end of the fifteenth century and throughout the sixteenth, they immigrated in larger numbers than in previous or subsequent periods. More importantly, they left an incredible amount of documentation about themselves, including commercial transactions, marriage and dowry negotiations, wills, petitions, and public and private gifts. The emphasis throughout is on the common folk, not for ideological reasons but because the majority were and remained commoners throughout the period. The time has come for them to tell their stories.

* * *

¹⁴ Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires*, p. 114.

¹⁵ Today the Greco-Venetian community has shrunk to between seventy to one hundred permanent residents.

This book is divided into two parts of three chapters each. Part I focuses on private life and Part II on the public world Greeks inhabited. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to sixteenth-century Venice: its unique position, its reputation, and the opportunities it afforded to both the native and foreign born. It analyses the Myth of Venice and how it was used to define Venetianess. It introduces the Greek community and places it in the wider context of other subject and foreign communities. The second part of the chapter examines the reasons for Greek immigration, that is, the circumstances which influenced or forced people to leave their homelands, their arrival in the city and the settling in process. Chapter 2 looks at Greek social networks through an examination of marriage patterns, family size, household arrangements, the creation of kin networks, and the incorporation of new friends. Chapter 3 focuses on working life, especially on occupations that attracted high Greek numbers. Chapter 4 relates the history behind the creation of a Greek confraternity (*scuola*) and the establishment of a Greek rite church. There is a detailed discussion of the difficulties the community faced in the middle years of the century: in-fighting, financial problems associated with a huge and costly building project, the establishment of a Greek see, and the appointment of its first Greek bishop. Integration is the main theme in Chapter 5: how Greeks adapted themselves into their new world and its ways, their participation in local rituals, the adoption and adaptation of local mores, and acts of giving, receiving, and patronage. In particular, it examines their dependence on the state for favours, including offices, licences, justice, and compensation. Chapter 6 analyses the many layers and meanings of Greek identity, or 'Greekness', in a sixteenth-century Venetian setting and how difficult it is to apply a neat set of labels to such a diverse group of people.

These are all important issues in the history of migration and settlement, but first I want to address two questions: where did Greeks come from, and why did they emigrate to Venice?

Part I

Arriving and Settling



Map 1: The Venetian Sea Empire

A VENETIAN SETTING

There had always been Greeks living in Venice, but there is no precise date to mark the start of settlement. Their presence goes back many centuries, mainly through Venice's links to the Byzantine Empire and after 1204 through the large number of Greek-speaking Byzantine territories the Venetians acquired after the disastrous (for the Byzantines) Fourth Crusade. According to one source, the first Greeks to settle in Venice were artists fleeing the rule of the iconoclast emperors in the eighth century.¹ Two hundred years later, Emperor Basil II, the Bulgar Slayer, commended the Republic's efforts in protecting Byzantine territory along the Dalmatian coast from Croat pirates and Bulgar incursions. To show his gratitude, Basil awarded Venetian merchants generous commercial privileges in Constantinople and gave the Republic permission to transport imperial troops during times of war. More importantly, he gave Venice the responsibility of protecting the Dalmatian coastline for the Empire. In this way a strategically important area fell under Venetian jurisdiction. This was somewhat of a boon to the Republic as it ensured a continual supply of timber for shipbuilding and other types of construction. It also allowed the Venetians a free hand to rid themselves of Croat pirates, the cause of much suffering to the Republic's merchants.

At the start of the eleventh century, the number of Greeks in Venice increased when Byzantine artists and artisans were invited to work on the

¹ On the exodus of people fleeing the iconoclast period, see Moschonas, 'I greci a Venezia', pp. 105–07.

mosaic decorations in St Mark's.² With the acquisition of a sea empire after the Fourth Crusade, the state encouraged qualified immigrants to settle and work in Venice. During the last decades of the Byzantine Empire, a number of noble families, humanists, and scholars immigrated to the West, particularly Italy, and more came after 1453. Many of the exiles eventually settled in Venice because of its economic, political, and cultural ties to Byzantium. In a letter of donation written to Doge Cristoforo Moro in 1468, the former Greek prelate, Cardinal Bessarion, summarized a popularly held view of Venice when he described it as a city known for its wisdom, tolerance, virtue, and justice, a city 'where power has the most formidable resources at its disposal, but is exercised only in just measure'.³ This view of Venice — or, more precisely, a mythical view of Venice — was one reason Bessarion chose to leave his library to it. But it was not the only one. The presence of a large Greek colony was also a factor, and Bessarion attributed this to Venice's resemblance to Byzantium:

After all this, how could I better dispose of this gift [of manuscripts] than amongst those to whom I was myself most tightly bound by their many gifts to me: than in the city which I had chosen as my new home when Greece was enslaved and where I had been welcomed and acclaimed by you with such honour? Age weighs me down ever more, while the various ills which afflict me and the others which could follow make me well aware of my own mortality. So I have given and granted all my books, both in Latin and Greek, to the most holy shrine of the Blessed Mark in your glorious city, sure in the knowledge that this is a duty owed to your generosity, to my gratitude, and to the country which you wanted me to share.⁴

Bessarion's assertion of the special relationship between Venice and Byzantium was somewhat unrealistic. Had he been referring only to the small number of exiles from Constantinople, then Venice was truly a suitable object of his praise. He did not consider that for countless others from the Greek-speaking world Byzantium in general and Constantinople in particular were beyond their consciousness. In fact, the Greeks who emigrated to Venice from the end of the fifteenth century onwards did so because Venice was *their* imperial capital, the only political culture they knew and with which they identified.

² For Byzantine artists and artisans living and working in Venice between the tenth and eleventh centuries, see da Mosto, *I Dogi di Venezia*, p. 72, and McNeill, *Venice: The Hinge of Europe*.

³ *Venice: A Documentary History*, ed. by Chambers and Pullan, p. 358.

⁴ *Venice: A Documentary History*, ed. by Chambers and Pullan, p. 358.

Myth and Reality

The city to which so many came was, by the second half of the fifteenth century, at the peak of its power. It had brought a large swathe of northeastern Italy under its control. It exercised its authority over the most important port cities along the Dalmatian, Albanian, and Greek coastlines. It controlled the most strategic islands in the eastern Mediterranean and the Ionian Sea. It had temporarily found a way through diplomatic channels to hold back Ottoman designs on its sea territories. At the start of the sixteenth century, it almost single-handedly defended itself and its mainland possessions from the League of Cambrai comprising the combined forces of the papacy, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the French and Spanish kings. Its merchants, spies, and diplomats (sometimes one and the same persons) could be found in every great trading city of the Levant and Western and Northern European ports. But this was also a transitory period for the Republic, because for every victory there was eventually a loss, so that by the end of the sixteenth century most of its sea empire was in Ottoman hands, and its commercial dominance faced challenges from the English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese. In short, the period of Venetian strategic, economic, and military changes coincided with the personal upheaval of thousands of subject people as they made their way to Venice and its remaining territories, and to the opportunities and security they hoped to find there. This in itself was nothing new, because people had always come to Venice. The difference now was that in the hundred years between 1470 and 1570, one ethnic group, the Greeks, came in large numbers, and they came to stay. What was the city they chose to settle in like?

Let us begin with what it was not. Venice commanded no strategic heights or river crossings, and it was not located in or near an economically viable area. It had no history of continuous settlement from Roman times and in fact no Roman past, although Venetian humanists worked feverishly to create a link to antiquity. Like all great states, Venice's origins were so rich in myth and legend that they often overwhelmed historical reality. According to its foundation myths, Venice's first inhabitants came from the mainland in search of protection from the 'barbarian hordes' besieging the Roman Empire in late antiquity. They sought refuge on the islands of the lagoon and in this way the sea became their protector from the troubles on the mainland. The settlers worked hard to contain the elements (tidal waves, marshy lands prone to sinking), to make the islands of the lagoon a secure place, a refuge from invaders and from the ravages of nature. Despite their unfortunate geographic setting, Venetians succeeded in creating a beautiful and well-ordered city, famous for its social and political

stability and the wisdom of its rulers. That they did so, said the myth-makers, reflected their intelligence and endeavour.

Having created a unique place, Venetians worked hard to preserve it from natural and man-made threats. One of the ways they did this was by turning their attention again to the sea, this time using it to create abundant wealth through trade. Venetians stopped at nothing to ensure their city's greatness, even replacing their original patron saint, Theodore, with the more remarkable Mark, a truly first-class patron whose symbol, the winged lion, symbolized the values associated with a powerful city republic. Venetians could be ruthless, especially to those who might pose an economic, political, or military threat. They were 'law and order' people, but again only to protect themselves and their city from nature's whims, from political intrigue, and from the designs of foreign rulers envious of their power. The metaphor of the sea was a constant throughout Venetian history, for the sea was not only a source of economic wealth and nourishment, it also physically protected Venetians from the machinations of powerful rulers on the mainland and beyond. There emerged then a view that here was a haven, a place of opportunity that welcomed outsiders.⁵

Reality, as usual, was less exciting and uplifting than myth. The city was built over the centuries on small islands located in a lagoon protected from the tides of the Adriatic Sea by a string of sand bars or *lidi* named Malamocco, Pellestrina, and Lido. New circumstances continuously arose requiring attention so that nothing was static, nor was anything taken for granted. The elements were not conquered; instead, vigilance and cooperation among people, nature, and technology ensured preservation. The ruling class concerned itself with practical, even mundane matters like land reclamation, the search for fresh water supplies, new construction, and renovation. Over time the state exerted its authority more and more on the physical well-being of the city. Its location meant Venice was different from other Italian city-states in almost every way: it had no walls, since the sea provided all the protection it needed, and it did not possess a countryside (*contado*) from which it could readily draw food supplies and labour.

⁵ The origins of Venice and other cities are more complex than the myths and some earlier historians have allowed. James Amelang draws on the foundation myths common to several Mediterranean cities: Amelang, 'The Myth of the Mediterranean City'. Jacob Burckhardt explains Venetian stability on the wisdom of rulers, the city's isolation from the troubles of the mainland, its resolve to use naval and military power to subjugate colonies in the Mediterranean and the Italian mainland, and its reliance on diplomacy to achieve its aims: see Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, pp. 42–43. On the relationship between environment and urban space, see Crouzet-Pavan, 'Toward an Ecological Understanding of the Myth of Venice'.

At the same time, it shared characteristics with other Italian cities of similar size. It was crowded and space was at a premium, as there were only so many habitable islands in the lagoon upon which the city could expand. There were few open areas. Neighbourhood squares (called *campi*) provided spaces for markets, wells, recreation, and an escape from overcrowded living conditions. Surprisingly, given the physical restraints, the state made little effort to restrict the number of inhabitants. Despite plague and warfare, the population of Venice remained fairly high for a city its size. In 1509 it had between 100,000 and 115,000 people; by 1540 the population had increased to 150,000.⁶ In early 1575 there was another rise, this time to about 180,000. However, between 1575 and 1577 an extremely lethal outbreak of the plague killed around 50,000 people, so that by 1581 the population had fallen to 130,000. Despite plague and almost constant warfare, population numbers recovered mainly through immigration, and at no time during the sixteenth century did they fall below 100,000.⁷

This was a city with a well-known reputation for social and political stability. Because Venice had never been a proxy state for the ambitions of the Holy Roman Emperor and the papacy, it was spared the Guelf–Ghibelline and magnate-commoner factional upheavals that tore apart other Italian cities in the medieval period. Instead, from its beginnings the Republic had looked south and east to the important political and trading centres of the Levant, and at first the Byzantine, and then the Ottoman empires. Byzantium had been its nominal political master in very early times and this served to strengthen its ties to that part of the world. In general, the Levant remained a primary focus of Venice's commercial, territorial, and diplomatic interests throughout the early modern period.

The city's social and political structure was defined and refined over time. Wealthy families gradually consolidated their power over state and society, keeping vigilant so that no individual or group dominated political offices. Three distinct groups of Venetians evolved, with the largest, the commoners, denied political rights. The two elite classes, the patricians and the original citizens (*cittadini originarii*), enjoyed rights and privileges that were not available to commoners. Membership in both was defined by birth, but well-to-do native and foreign-born commoners who met residency and taxation requirements

⁶ ASV, *Provveditori sopra i beni inculti*, reg. 299, 15 December 1540. Until the introduction of formal censuses in the early 1590s, population numbers were based on the sale and consumption of grain.

⁷ Cowan, *The Urban Patriciate*, p. 53; McNeill, *Venice: The Hinge of Europe*, p. 132.

could apply for acquired citizenship (*cittadini de intus et extra*), and in exceptional circumstances, original citizenship. Both forms involved costly procedures that could take many years to resolve. If successful (and many did not succeed), the applicant became a Venetian citizen and enjoyed the social and commercial privileges of his new status. Patrician ranks produced admirals of the fleets, colonial governors, senators, government ministers, and the doge, while the Republic's top civil servants and heads of government departments were drawn from the *cittadini originarii*. The two elite classes engaged in international commerce and had a monopoly on the luxury trade.⁸ Both classes were regularly renewed either through out-marriage or when the Republic (usually in need of a lot of money) invited men who had excelled in some way to apply to join the ranks of the elite.⁹ The majority of Venetians, the commoners, were barred from political life and the highest offices of government, but they could and did participate in the city's social, religious, mercantile, and civic activities. Men and women from all three social groups could be found in the imperial territories as merchants, fighters, lower- and mid-level administrators, artisans, and farmers.

Venice was divided into six administrative wards (*sestieri*) and further subdivided into parishes. Space and its uses defined the city religiously, economically, politically, and socially. St Mark's Square was the city's administrative and political centre and the site for major celebrations and festivities. The Arsenal was the main industrial zone, the Rialto area the commercial one, while the city's religious heart lay on its eastern tip where the cathedral, San Pietro di Castello, was located. Like all major cities then and now, there were areas defined by occupation, ethnicity, and faith. Most non-Venetians lived in particular parts of the city, but in most cases this was a matter of convenience or

⁸ There is a substantial body of work on patricians and *cittadini originarii*. On patricians, see Burke, *Venice and Amsterdam*; Chojnacki, 'Social Identity in Renaissance Venice' and 'In Search of the Venetian Patriciate'; Cowan, *The Urban Patriciate and Marriage, Manners and Mobility*; Davies, *A Venetian Family and its Fortune*; Romano, *Patricians and Popolani*, pp. 25–27; Grubb, 'Elite Citizens'; van Gelder, *Trading Places*; and Ell, 'Citizenship and Immigration to Venice'.

⁹ There were four groups of patricians. The most prestigious were the old houses (*case vecchie*), twelve families that had voted for the first doge in 697, and the new houses (*case nuove*), those families entering the patriciate after 800. The third and fourth groups were called the *case nuovissime*. The older of these were families that gave large sums to the Chioggia war effort in 1380. The more recent 'new houses' were families that contributed 100,000 ducats to the defence of Crete (1646–69) or the War of the Morea (1684–1717); da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, pp. 70–73.

choice rather than enforced segregation. Greeks, Dalmatians, and Albanians preferred the parishes of Castello since many worked in and around the Arsenal and as sailors on the fleets. Lucchese silk workers and merchants congregated in the parishes between San Marco and Canareggio in areas that had always been associated with the silk industry. German and Ottoman merchants had their own residences and warehouses (*fondachi*), the former at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, next to the Rialto Bridge, and the latter on the opposite side of the Grand Canal beyond the Rialto markets, at the Fondaco dei Turchi.

The only people barred from choosing where they could live were the Jews. They were obliged to live in the Ghetto, in a designated area physically separated from the Christian population. While Greeks, Germans, Dalmatians, and other non-Venetians lived in spaces that had become theirs by accident or over time, Jews, and to a lesser extent visiting Muslim merchants, were restricted to where they lived by official decree.¹⁰ Ottoman merchants eventually resided in the Fondaco dei Turchi and all their windows and doors facing Christian homes had to be boarded up. Walls enclosed the Ghetto, and at sunset Christian guards locked the gates and did not open them again till sunrise. The aim of all this was to stop Jews and Muslims from 'contaminating' Christians. For some reason, this 'contamination' did not apply during working hours when Jews, Muslims, and Christians (of all stripes) came together to conduct business with each other in the city's markets. In general, the state made it its policy to keep a watchful eye on everyone, including its own. Despite these restrictions, which were less onerous than those in other cities at the time, Venice continued to attract outsiders, be they Christian or not.

The city's permanent and semi-permanent foreign communities had several shared characteristics. They were fairly self-regulatory. All of them had set up their own confraternities (*scuole*) that served as meeting houses, charitable institutions, and keepers of the community's customs and traditions. The Lucchese established the Scuola di Volto Santo and the Scuola di Santa Zita in the early

¹⁰ For the establishment of the Ottoman warehouse, the *Fondaco dei Turchi*, see the following: Preto, *Venezia e I Turchi*; Burke, 'Francesco di Demetri Litino, the Inquisition and the Fondaco dei Turchi'; Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, pp. 197–210, 234. For the German community, see Braunstein, 'Remarques sur la population allemande'; Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, pp. 77–78 and 200–201. The literature on the Jewish community of Venice is extensive: Calabi, 'The City of the Jews'; Cooperman, 'Venetian Policy towards Levantine Jews'; Crouzet-Pavan, 'Venice between Jerusalem, Byzantium and Divine Retribution'; Malkiel, *A Separate Republic*; Ravid, 'The Venetian Government and the Jews' and 'The Religious, Economic and Social Background and Context of the Establishment of the Ghetti in Venice'; Zorattini, 'Jews, Crypto-Jews and the Inquisition'.

part of the fourteenth century, and in 1409 Florentine bankers formed a *scuola* dedicated to St John the Baptist, the patron saint of Florence. Dalmatians, Albanians, and Greeks founded their *scuole* in the fifteenth century, and the Jews theirs in the sixteenth. As David Malkiel has written, there were many corporate bodies in Venice that the state recognized. These bodies, besides giving voice to a great variety of people, also reflected Venetian practice and mores since by law they had to be organized on local models.¹¹ In some instances, as with the Jews and the subject people of the *Stato da Mar*, ethnic *scuole* symbolized the change from immigrant or temporary settler to a permanent one. Hence, these bodies served two contradictory yet complementary functions: they maintained and supported the peculiarities and differences of the ethnic or religious group while reflecting its incorporation into mainstream Venetian society.

The myths about Venetian uniqueness formed the ideological basis that defined the Republic and differentiated it from other city-states. Certainly the city was a formidable naval and military power, with widespread commercial interests and with a ruling class determined to protect these. These interests underpinned the acquisition of a sea empire after 1204 and a land empire in the fifteenth century. In practical terms this meant the protection of sea routes in the eastern Mediterranean and the Levant, dominance of the Adriatic, and the creation of a security zone on the *Terraferma* to shield Venice from aggressive local and foreign powers and to provide it with foodstuffs and raw materials. The acquisition of empire also offered greater opportunities for people at home and abroad. The Myth of Venice bound ruler and ruled, and to that end it was aggressively promoted throughout the sea and land possessions. In the *Stato da Mar* it was reflected in a distinct Venetian architectural style, especially of public buildings, and by symbols like the Lion of St Mark that could be found decorating walls, gates, fountains, and other public and even private spaces. It was further reinforced through language, ritual, public celebrations, and processions in which everyone participated. The extent to which any of this penetrated the consciences of subject people is hard to gauge, but evidence indicates there was a great deal of familiarity with Venetian sentiments, symbols, and rituals. Hence, the Myth of Venice acted as a cohesive agent between empire and subject people by interweaving the state's interests with those of its subjects.

¹¹ Malkiel, *A Separate Republic*, p. 18.

Empire and Immigration

The Republic’s interest in the East preceded the imperial period. By the tenth century, Venetian merchants had set up commercial colonies in the Levant and Constantinople and in this way eventually dominated the luxury trade in the West. After the Fourth Crusade (1204), the Venetians acquired more territories of commercial and strategic importance. Imperial expansion was justified on the dual principles of strategic necessity and the unimpeded flow of (Venetian)

Table 1.1: The Chronology of Empire

Date	Event/Acquisition	Venetian-Ottoman Wars	Territorial Losses
1204	Fourth Crusade: overseas empire established		
1210	Crete, Negroponte, Modon, and Coron		
1386	Corfu acquired		
1388	Napoli di Romania acquired		
1407	Lepanto acquired		
1453		Fall of Constantinople	
1463–79		First Veneto-Ottoman War	
1464	Monemvasia acquired		
1470			Fall of Negroponte
1482	Zante acquired		
1489	Queen Caterina Corner cedes Cyprus to Venice		
1499–1503		Second Veneto-Ottoman War	1499: Ottomans take Lepanto
1500	Cephalonia, Paxoi, Santa Maura (Leucada) acquired		Ottomans take Modon and Coron
1537–40		Third Veneto-Ottoman War	
1540			Ottomans conquer Napoli di Romania and Monemvasia
1570–71		Fourth Veneto-Ottoman War/ War of Cyprus	September 1570: Nicosia falls May 1571: Famagusta falls
1571		October: Lepanto victory	
1645–69		Fifth Veneto-Ottoman War (the Cretan Wars)	
1645			Ottomans take western Crete
1669			Ottomans conquer the rest of Crete

commercial activity in the eastern Mediterranean, Italy, and other parts of Europe. But the acquisition of empire also imposed new realities on the state.

The territories provided Venice with expanded markets and goods, manpower for its fleets, and strategic defence against its enemies. Elites and commoners were sent out as colonial administrators, secretaries, minor officials, and workers. These men were responsible for overseeing the levying and collection of taxes, the maintenance of fortifications, roads, and ports, and the protection the populace from local and foreign troublemakers. Imperialism was costly because fortress maintenance, tax collection, and defence were time consuming and expensive. In the *Stato da Mar* Venetian rule could be benign, as in some of the port cities of Dalmatia and the Ionian Islands, or it could be severe. Because of its size and its strategic and economic importance, Crete was ruled directly from Venice. From early days Venetians were encouraged to move to the island as settlers, so that Crete became the only real Venetian colony. It had its own council and a Senate-appointed doge who served for three years. Cyprus, a late addition to the *Stato da Mar* (1489), had the most diverse ethnic mix dating back to Byzantium and the Crusades, and consequently a number of noble families of Cypriot, Byzantine, Catalan, French, and Venetian origin. These elites exercised considerable power over the territory and its governors. Most other territories had Venetian governors but few colonists or noble families. This meant on-going negotiations between governors and locals. Ragusa, Spalato, Napoli di Romania, Corfu, and the other Ionian Islands enjoyed relative freedom to rule themselves as long as they acknowledged the supremacy of the *Serenissima*.¹²

In practical terms, the state provided work for locals as castellans, millers, road and port workers, as sailors on the fleets, and minor public offices. In the Morea, Greek and Albanian men were encouraged to join the companies of the light horse to fight Venice's enemies at home and abroad. Just as Greeks, Dalmatians, Paduans, and others moved to Venice to take advantage of work there, Venetians settled in the new territories, some temporarily, others permanently to work as merchants, builders, craftsmen, and public officials. The result was greater social and cultural interaction between local and foreigner. The state tried to temper this in some places, such as Crete, by enacting laws that restricted coexistence because its worst fear was the blurring of differ-

¹² For the work of administrators in the sea empire, see *The Greek Correspondence of Bartolomeo Minio*, ed. and trans. by Wright and Melville-Jones; O'Connell, *Men of Empire*; McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*.

ences where they affected the ruling classes. When Venetian patricians married into local noble families, and when they adopted the customs, language, and in some cases the religious rite of the locals, their loyalty to Venice could no longer be taken for granted.¹³ Yet Venetians continued to go to the colonies just as foreigners and subject people came to Venice.

The Republic had a very complicated relationship with its subjects; however, imperial rule certainly had its benefits, and perhaps the most important of these was legal status. Subject people came from faraway places, they spoke languages that were not Italian, and a large number were adherents to a rite that was not Latin. But they were not foreigners the way Germans, Spaniards, English, Turks, Florentines, and Neapolitans were. People from the empire were not Venetians: they were Venetian subjects. This meant they had full access to Venetian courts; they could work at any job their class and abilities allowed them; they had the protection of the state and its navy; they could live in any Venetian territory knowing that they had the protection of Venetian law; they could ask for favours, compensation, a judicial review, or any other matter or privilege enjoyed by everyone who resided 'in the shade of Your Serenity'.¹⁴ The imperial system was by no means perfect, but it provided uniformity for a large and diverse body of people.

It was also capable of creating discontent and open rebellion. There might have been advantages to Venetian rule, but there were also disadvantages. Local people were subjected to the onerous demands by the state. Taxation and heavy duties, including pressed labour and *corvées*, were highly unpopular and often led to tension, dissension, and unrest. In some territories the Venetians allowed the Latin church to supplant the Eastern church with disastrous consequences. In the early fifteenth century the Latin church's discriminatory policies towards the Eastern church led many people from Coron and Modon to emigrate to other territories, especially Crete, where the Eastern church was also suppressed but not as heavily. Then in the 1490s the two cities came under

¹³ In 1363 Venetian feudatories on Crete rebelled against the state in what came to be known as the Saint Titus Day Revolt. The immediate cause was the imposition of a new tax, but other grievances had been building up over time. Some Cretan patrician families (*archontes*) joined the rebels. The rebellion was eventually put down and its leaders punished. The incident served as an example of what can happen when conquerors and colonists identify more with their new world rather than the old one of their forefathers. McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, pp. 133–67.

¹⁴ 'sotto l'ombra della Serenità Vostra.' This popular phrase appears regularly in the petitions of local and subject people, and of foreigners.

Ottoman threat, and Venice was desperate to defend them. Because of their prominent geographic position (both towns protected entry into and out of the Adriatic), the two towns acted as junctions for Venetian shipping going to and returning from the Eastern trade routes. Modon, the more important of the two, was used as a shipping repair yard, commercial centre, and supply point. The Venetians called it 'the eye of the Republic', while Coron was the second eye.¹⁵ Modonites and Coronites in Crete were offered handsome concessions, including the restoration of the rights of the Eastern church if they returned home to repopulate, fortify, and defend the two towns. By then, though, it was a case of too little, too late. Modon fought but could not withstand the Ottomans, who burned and sacked the town. Coron, not wishing to share Modon's fate, surrendered. The Venetians lost two key towns.

From the late fifteenth century onwards, the cities and islands of the *Stato da Mar* were continually threatened by the westward push of the Ottomans. As a result, the sea empire became even more costly to maintain and defend. In practical terms, this meant a shortage of funds for the upkeep and reinforcement of fortifications; but then, for decades the authorities in Venice had neglected their maintenance despite officials' reports about deteriorating conditions and pleas from territorial governors for assistance. The fall of a colony led to the emigration of Venetians and locals to other parts of the sea empire or to Venice. This was how many Greeks found their way to the city. Not everyone was fleeing the Turks, however. Many more people moved to the city because they wanted to; for them, immigration offered opportunities and maybe a sense of adventure. Others came to Venice because they had family there, and a few came to escape legal or social problems at home. The reasons people immigrated then were as varied and complex as they are today.¹⁶

¹⁵ Andrews, *Castles of the Morea*, pp. 14 and 60.

¹⁶ 'We decided to move to Australia for a lark' was one English woman's explanation why she and her husband immigrated to Melbourne, Australia, in the early 1970s. The couple, from the north of England, had good jobs and their own home. Her family lived near them and his were in northern Greece. Yet they decided to see what Australia was like. They admitted that the Australian government's massive media campaign at the time, selling Australia as a dream destination, influenced their decision, along with pictures of endless beaches and sun, rare commodities in northern England. That they ended up in Melbourne, one of the coldest, wettest, and windiest cities in Australia must have come as quite a shock. Yet they stayed for ten years before homesickness, loneliness, and nostalgia drove them back home. For this and other stories of immigration and re-immigration in the recent past, see Burke, *Migrants in their Own Homeland*.

A large number of Greeks were voluntary immigrants, people who chose to leave their homelands because they had been invited to Venice by a relative or friend, usually with the promise of work; or they were women and children joining husbands, brothers, and fathers already in the city, what we now call 'family reunification'. Others got there by chance or luck or because they had heard about the availability of jobs in Venice or one of its mainland territories. A very small group of immigrants came from territories beyond the *Stato da Mar*, Greeks from other parts of Italy and the Ottoman Empire, especially its commercial centres like Tripoli, Salonika, Ioannina, Constantinople, and Trebizond. Most of the people in this group were merchants, followed by a very small number of mariners, artisans, and soldiers. They were all men, and most had left their families in their home cities, which implied they did not intend to stay in Venice permanently. In short, the majority of Greek immigrants in Venice lived there voluntarily.

This was not the case for people fleeing the Ottoman takeover of their homelands. They were involuntary immigrants, or to put it more precisely, refugees. The distinction is important because, as we shall see later, it impacted on the community. The ratio of voluntary immigrants to refugees was fairly even throughout the sixteenth century. But whereas the arrival of the former remained steady throughout the 1500s, that of latter stopped or became a trickle fairly soon after their initial arrival. Refugee immigration levels considerably increased in the years immediately before and after the Ottoman conquests of Venetian territories. For example, there were Naupliots (people from Napoli di Romania) in Venice as early as the 1520s, but their numbers were low: the number enrolled in the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci was thirteen (out of about two hundred members) for the period 1498–1530, the years covering the first register of members.¹⁷ In 1540 Napoli di Romania became Ottoman, and soon the number of Naupliots enrolled in the second membership registry (1532–62) increased four-fold, to fifty-two.¹⁸ A similar increase is discernible among Cypriots in the period 1570–75, the years of the Cyprus war and its aftermath. By the end of the sixteenth century, the number of Cypriots in the city increased, and this was reflected both in scuola membership and in the 1592–94 census.

¹⁷ Pardos, 'Alphabetical Catalogue of the First Members', Part A, pp. 325–26.

¹⁸ There were far more Naupliots in Venice than those enrolled in the *scuola*; Mavroidi, 'A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity', p. 65.

Few Greeks immigrated with family and kin intact. This was particularly true among the working class whose family and kin networks tended to be small anyway. Only wealthy merchants and the military settled in Venice or its dependencies with most of their family, that is, spouse and children and in some cases parents and relations. A sample of two hundred well-to-do individuals revealed that eighty-two (41 per cent) already had at least two or more members of their immediate family and kin in Venice, usually more. But a similar sample, this time of two hundred working class individuals showed only twenty-five (13 per cent) had relations in the city, mainly nephews, nieces, and in-laws. Class, however, was not the only reason families did not immigrate *en masse*. The migration of every person in a family was an expense that was beyond the financial capability of most, so that only one or two members undertook the voyage. Among servants, artisans, and maritime workers at least, immigration took place at a younger age, before the individual acquired family and kin. In the conquered territories it was often those with the closest ties to the former regime or with commercial or other work-related connections to the Venetian state who migrated in large numbers. The Mormori of Napoli di Romania, wealthy and active in the Venetian administration of their hometown, are a good example of this: six branches of the family immigrated to Venice after 1540 and just as many went to Crete. Regardless of the numbers, the majority of locals did not emigrate when their *patria* became Ottoman. Some simply could not get away, while others did not feel particularly threatened by the new overlords or may have been supportive of the new regime. In Crete and Cyprus one of the first acts of the Ottomans was to reinstate the primacy of the Greek church, a move that was greeted with huge support by the local population and might have influenced the decision to stay put.¹⁹

The situation was different for people from the territories that remained part of the *Stato da Mar*. They could go home as often as time, money, and opportunity allowed them; in fact, it was common to find well-to-do families that comfortably divided their time between Venice and their homelands. The Cretan wine merchant Thodorino Lombardo rented a house in Venice where he lived a good portion of the year, but his family home was Candia Town, where his wife lived with the couple's six children. His three sons were responsible for the family's grapevines, and Thodorino dealt with wine merchants in Crete and Venice. Lombardo never thought of Venice as his permanent home because he

¹⁹ Molly Greene has found that very few families left Crete after the Ottoman conquest in 1669, and many of those who did had close ties to the Venetians; Greene, *A Shared World*, p. 37.

went to Crete frequently. Even so, in the end he did not make it home in time; he died and was buried in Venice. Antonio Eparco, a merchant, publisher, and scholar, moved his family between Venice and Corfu several times in his lifetime in pursuit of his many mercantile activities. Giacomo Samariari had commercial and family interests in both his native Zante and Venice and divided his time between both. From the early 1550s till his death in 1592, Alessandro Ram, a merchant from Constantinople, conducted business from his homes in his native city and in Venice.²⁰

This return option was not available to refugees, especially in the years immediately following the fall of their homelands. For Naupliots, Monemvasians, Modonites, and others, the opportunity to reassemble the family abroad was not possible. They faced a greater challenge, to create new social and employment networks from among their compatriots and beyond. They met and befriended co-workers, colleagues, neighbours, and formed bonds which sometimes led to marriages and in this way to a new family and kin. The bonds were based on common interests, work, friendship, convenience, love, and affection. For some, the place of origin of their new friends was a factor in the way they went about choosing companions. However, not everyone had a large number of compatriots to choose from, particularly people from the smaller islands and towns. Place of origin (*patria*) played an important role in determining one's social circle, but it was not the only criterion, and in many cases it was a minor one at that.

In one sense, the diversity of Venice was reflected in the diversity of its Greek immigrants. They came from many different homelands, each of which had their own unique customs and history. Most people were from the empire's sea colonies, but there were others who came from non-Venetian lands. Place of origin was one form of identification, and, thankfully for this researcher, most people included the name of their *patria* when identifying themselves. Table 1.2 is a summary of Greek homelands; the asterisk indicates Venetian territories lost to the Ottomans from the late fifteenth and throughout the sixteenth centuries. Crete, Corfu, Zante, and the other Ionian Islands remained part of the *Stato da Mar* and, with the exception of Crete, were to do so until the fall of the Republic in 1797. The Aegean islands, mainland Greece, Constantinople,

²⁰ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 1246, Giulio Ziliol, no. 692, 7 January 1590 (Thodorino Lombardo); Mayroidi, 'A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity', pp. 91–92; ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10636, Agostino Pellestrina, fol. 205r, 18 August 1539 (Antonio Eparco). Samariari's will is ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 204, 9 April 1580. Ram's will is ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 1224, Giovanni Battista Padavin, no. 10, 7 October 1592.

and the Black Sea towns were part of the Ottoman Empire; the Italian mainland included Venice's *Terraferma* cities and towns. The numbers indicate a fairly even distribution of voluntary immigrants to refugees.

Table 1.2: The Greek Homelands of the *Stato da Mar*

Place of Origin 1498–1600	Number (percentage)
Crete	239 (25%)
Napoli di Romania	214 (21%)
Cyprus	165 (16%)
The Morea (Modon, Coron, Monemvasia)	101 (10%)
Corfu	99 (10%)
Zante	63 (6%)
Aegean Islands	35 (3%)
Ionian Islands (except Corfu and Zante)	27 (3%)
Mainland Greece (e.g., Arta, Ioannina, Salonika)	26 (2%)
Constantinople and Black Sea coast	18 (2%)
Italian mainland	12 (1%)
Dalmatian coast	11 (1%)
TOTAL	1010 (100%)
Number of voluntary immigrants (out of 1010)	530
Number of refugees (out of 1010)	480

Initially refugees had limited contacts with their homelands, at least until Venice re-established diplomatic and commercial relations with the new rulers. This could take a while and much depended on the intensity of the hostilities. If a territory had fought hard, as was the case at Modon and later in Cyprus, then the Ottomans left little standing. Towns were destroyed, and anyone who had taken up arms and survived was immediately imprisoned and then enslaved. Eyewitness accounts about the siege of Modon reached Venetian officials at Corfu in the summer of 1500. The Turks were ruthless, they reported, slaughtering the male population and taking the governor, other officials, and all children under twelve into slavery. The fires that destroyed the city and its environs could be seen 'as far as Zante' where a few Modonites and Venetians had taken refuge.²¹

²¹ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, III, 693–94, 732, 905–06; Andrews, *Castles of the Morea*, p. 60.

The brutality was repeated in Cyprus seventy years later, particularly in Nicosia and Famagusta. However, if a territory quickly surrendered, it was spared. Venetian officials and anyone else who wanted to accompany them were given time to pack their belongings, papers, relics, even church bells, and board the ships bound for Venice or one of its dependencies. Upon learning of the fate of Modon, its closest neighbour Coron immediately raised the white flag and was spared. In 1540 Venetian officials negotiated the surrender of Napoli di Romania and Monemvasia to the Ottomans and in return the officials and those locals who wanted to leave were given time to prepare for their departure. In both cities hundreds chose to follow the Venetians rather than stay. Such people then were truly refugees because in their minds at least, to live in the *patria* under Ottoman rule meant political, social, and economic disenfranchisement.

Settling

It is not possible to calculate the exact number of Greeks who immigrated annually or in total during the course of the sixteenth century because the state did not keep records of all new arrivals. For the same reason, it is difficult to put a precise number on the city's Greek population throughout the same period. The historian Apostolos Vacalopoulos, citing a sixteenth-century source, estimated that there were 15,000 Greek men, women, and children living in Venice in 1585 out of a total population of 135,000, an unusually high number which he attributed to 'the arrival of Greek ships — often fifteen to twenty percent per month [of all Venetian shipping] from Constantinople, Alexandria, Crete and other islands'.²² Other historians place the figure much lower. Ioannis Veludos, Georghios Ploumidis, and Nikolaos Moschonas, citing earlier work and their own research, come up with more conservative and realistic estimates of between 4000 and 4500 people.²³ As Venetian subjects and Christians, Greeks had no legal restrictions about where they lived and what work they did. They were free to take up any profession open to people of their class and

²² Vacalopoulos, *The History of Modern Hellenism*, B1, p. 70. Vacalopoulos attributes the 15,000 figure to Andrea Darmario, a local Greek manuscript copier and book trader, but he does not cite Darmario's or any other sources.

²³ Veludos, *The Greek Orthodox Colony in Venice*; Ploumidis, 'Considerazioni sulla popolazione greca a Venezia', p. 221. Ploumidis bases his figures on the death notices of eleven parishes in San Pietro di Castello. Moschonas, 'I greci a Venezia', p. 108. My own figures, based on the census of 1592–94, marriage and death registers, and *scuola* membership confirm those cited by Ploumidis and Moschonas.



Map 2: The *sestiere* of Castello and its Parishes

to settle anywhere in the city; in fact, there were no exclusively Greek streets, with the exception of the area in Sant' Antonin parish immediately around the Greek church of San Giorgio dei Greci. Movement from neighbourhood to neighbourhood or between parishes was common, whereas movement out of the *sestiere* of Castello was not. The overwhelming majority chose to live there because of its proximity to the docks along the waterside borders of several parishes and because of the presence of many other Greek settlers in the area.

Most Greeks lived in six parishes closest to the Arsenal: San Pietro di Castello, San Biagio, San Martin, Santa Trinità, San Giovanni in Bragora, and Sant' Antonin. This was not by accident. Together, these parishes constituted one of the busiest shipping areas of the city, hence it was normal for both Greek and non-Greek merchants and mariners to gravitate there in search of work and lodgings. The area was, and remains, primarily working and lower middle class with lower rents than in other parts of the city. Venetians were used to foreigners living among them, and while the arrival of new people could cause much tension in a neighbourhood, there was a grudging acceptance of newcomers. The unique feature of Castello was the large and diverse concentration of for-

Table 1.3: Greek Residency by Parish

Parish	Number of people
San Pietro di Castello	530 (21%)
Sant' Antonin	502 (20%)
San Martin	346 (14%)
San Severo	238 (9%)
San Giovanni Nuovo	167 (7%)
Santa Trinità	158 (6%)
San Giovanni in Bragora	128 (5%)
Other parishes in Castello	226 (9%)
Other Venetian parishes	225 (9%)
TOTAL	2520 (100%)

eigners within its borders. Besides Greeks there were colonies of Albanians and Dalmatians, and the latter had their *scuola*, San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, in Sant' Antonin parish, near the Greek church and *scuola*.²⁴ The number of new arrivals was continuous for the whole of the century, and not only because of the loss of imperial territories. Demand for mariners and artisans to build and work on ships was great; Frederic Lane found that by the sixteenth century maritime workers were increasingly Slavs and Greeks.²⁵ Robert Davis estimates that in the seventeenth century, about one in every nine *popolani* households in Castello were foreigners, 'the ratio generally maintained in the central parishes of the *sestiere* although reaching as high as one in every five hearths in the parish of San Severo, where large Greek and Armenian colonies had established themselves'.²⁶ Mobility between parishes in Castello was common, though movement beyond it was rare. A handful of families lived in San Marco, and an even smaller number were on the Dorsoduro side of the Grand Canal. Greek households were scattered throughout Castello rather than concentrated in one area or parish. (The distribution of Greeks throughout is summarized in Table 1.3.²⁷)

²⁴ The *scuola* is home to Carpaccio's paintings depicting the lives of St George, St Jerome, and St Triphon, the *scuola*'s patron saints.

²⁵ Lane, 'Wages and Recruitment of Venetian Galeotti', p. 18.

²⁶ Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal*, p. 93. Davis's source is the 1642 census.

²⁷ The figures in Table 1.3 are based on documentation where place of residence would

Castello remained the centre of Greek residency and work during the whole of the sixteenth century and beyond it. To this day, the streets nearest the Greek church bear names such as *Calle dei Greci*, *Salizada dei Greci*, and *Ramo dei Greci*, and the *sestiere* remains home to the community's institutions.

We do not know if immigrants arriving in Venice expected any help, but there were formal and informal organizations offering assistance. For many, particularly military men, mariners, and refugees, the state provided assistance with work and some form of compensation for outstanding service, enslavement, serious injury, and loss of property. Greeks long settled in Venice helped newcomers, and the Greek *Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci* did what it could to assist people in finding accommodation and work. It also provided charity, some subsidized housing, and poor relief. Even with public and private help, however, the transition from immigrant to settler was not easy, and people faced many hardships. Housing was limited and rents were high so that at the outset it was common to find large groups of people sharing accommodation. Despite Venice's reputation for tolerance, in reality there was tension between the settled, regardless of ethnicity, and newcomers whose presence raised the possibility of social and economic disruption. Newcomers, it seems, always threaten the status quo. Even many of their compatriots, who had once been immigrants themselves, were often wary of the newly arrived. In fact, the sooner immigrants were settled into homes and work, the better for everyone concerned.

By settling and creating new social and work connections, Venetian Greeks moved from immigrants to residents, part of the evolution from outsider to insider. At the same time, re-establishing ties with family and friends, creating new social circles, and expanding the family have always been vitally important to an immigrant community's long-term survival.

normally be noted (notarial documents, marriage and death records, *scuola* membership lists, and the census of 1592–1594). The numbers for San Pietro di Castello and San Giovanni in Bragora parishes, where very large numbers of Greeks resided, are skewed downwards because of the absence of census records for these parishes.

NEW TIES AND A NEW COMMUNITY

Immigration implies the permanent separation from one's homeland and its shared memories, traditions, and history. From the late fifteenth century onwards, older, established Venetian Greeks incorporated compatriots from diverse regions, and in this way created a new, broader, and larger community. For their part, new arrivals had to re-establish networks crucial to their survival because these provided them with security, work, kin, and friends. Over time, they consolidated and expanded these networks to include Greeks from *patrie* other than their own and other, non-Greek immigrants as well as local people. For most of the century then, Greek society was in a permanent state of change as it absorbed and accommodated continuous waves of new settlers.

Population Distribution and Household Patterns

The first post-Tridentine census (1592–94) provides a comprehensive record of Venetian households at the end of the sixteenth century. Census takers recorded information such as residents' names, ages and occupations, their relationships to other people in their homes, and in many instances their ethnicity and religious rite. In this way, the census offers a vivid description of the city's inhabitants, its neighbourhoods, the relationships between people, and the diversity and complexity of living arrangements. The data also provides clear evidence of Venice's multicultural and multi-ethnic make-up and articulates the different meanings of household. In the broadest sense, this was a group of people living under one roof, regardless of their relationship to one another. More traditionally, it meant a family and its kin, that is, people related by blood and marriage. For the census takers, a household was an individual or a

group of people living together under the one roof. Each household had a head (*capo*) who might live alone or with her/his family, kin, servants, lodgers, and unexplained others. Greek households reflected this diversity. There are complete records of Greek households in the census records of Sant' Antonin, San Martin, San Giovanni Nuovo, Santa Trinità, and San Severo parishes. Taken together these parishes had 225 Greek households (around eight hundred individuals). Obviously there were many more Greeks in Castello, but finding them is difficult because census takers did not always identify people by ethnicity or rite; after all, the aim was to 'count the souls', not necessarily to elaborate differences. The absence of censuses from two parishes, San Pietro di Castello, where the majority of Greeks lived, and San Giovanni in Bragora, skews the numbers further towards the lower end of the scale.¹

Greeks were spread very thinly across the five parishes, proving there were no exclusively Greek streets. The decision about where to live was based on factors such as familiarity, proximity to work, and affordability. There is no evidence to suggest that living close to compatriots was a priority, and certainly the state had no policy of separating Greeks from the rest of the population. However, the census brought out the many differences between parishes, and a brief comparison between San Martin and Sant' Antonin parishes highlights some of these. There were sixty-five Greek rite households (147 people) in San Martin, most fairly small, about 1.8 people per unit. This figure was lower than the Greek average, which was about 3.5 people per household unit. San Martin had the highest number of widow-led households (twenty-four), and many of the women had other widows living with them. In comparison, Sant' Antonin parish recorded eleven widow-led households, Santa Trinità seven, San Severo five, and San Giovanni Nuovo four. San Martin was the most popular parish with single men and women and childless couples. These factors indicate that rents were lower here than in the other four parishes, making San Martin attractive for widows, low-paid workers, young people at the start of their working

¹ Most parish archives, including post-Tridentine censuses and registers of births, marriages, deaths, and baptisms, are in the Archivio della Curia Patriarcale di Venezia (ACPV). The majority of Greeks lived in San Pietro di Castello parish, and a significant number were in San Giovanni in Bragora parish. There is no 1592–94 census for San Pietro di Castello; I was told by archivists at the ACPV that it was either lost or destroyed. Most of the archives of San Giovanni in Bragora parish are still held in that church. I want to thank Monsignor Giovanni Favoretto of San Giovanni in Bragora for allowing me to go through that parish's archives. I also want to thank Micky White for initially speaking to Mons. Favoretto on my behalf. Sadly, the 1592–94 census is missing; it too may have been lost or destroyed.

lives — generally people with limited means. In fact, this parish had one of the highest concentrations of lower-working class residents in Castello, which was not surprising since it was located next door to the Arsenal. The most popular profession among Greek men was mariner, a poorly paid occupation; artisans made up the only other category. Sailors were away for long periods of time, so the combination of poor wages and long absences might account for small household size.² It could also explain the disproportionately high number of widows, since going to sea had its dangers, especially in the sixteenth century when Venice was constantly at war and mariners were expected to have military training as well as seafaring skills.

Sant' Antonin parish was smaller in size than San Martin, but it recorded the highest number of Greek residents among the five parishes (19 per cent). The Greek *scuola* and church were located there, and all Greek religious — monks, nuns, and priests and their families — lived in the parish, close to San Giorgio dei Greci. Sant' Antonin was home to thirteen Greek religious households. Seven of these were nuns, including *pizzochere*, women who joined a third order but lived uncloistered lives, a custom followed by both Greek and Venetian women. There were three households of priests with their wives and children, two of monks, and the household of Gabriele Sevro, the Metropolitan of Filadelfia (the name of the Greek see). At the time of the census Greek nuns were not yet cloistered (a convent was not established until 1599), so most of them lived privately and took in boarders to help with the rent. Suor Zinovia shared her home with a woman named Zuanna; Suor Christoduli's household included a woman named Elena and her daughter Ludovica.³ Three lay families subleased rooms to nuns, but no families took in monks. Interestingly, no monks lived on their own either, preferring to cohabit with their co-religionists. Given the diversity of the occupations of its residents (public officials, religious, mariners, artisans, merchants, and domestic servants), the parish attracted a broad range of people, from low income earners to the wealthy. In contrast, no Greek of means lived in San Martin.

The average size of Greek households was 3.3 people, and the average number of children was 2.2 per family. These numbers support the view that the nuclear family unit — that is, a couple with or without children and in some cases one other person such as a family member, a godchild or a servant

² Of the thirty-six male heads of households in San Martin, fifteen were sailors, six were tailors, and two were engaged in other artisan occupations. Thirteen did not list an occupation.

³ ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 1, Sant' Antonin, unfoliated.

— was the most common type of living arrangement.⁴ As well they support Ploumides's and Pardos's arguments that the socio-economic status of most Greeks was low to middling, and like others of their class, they had smaller families. Table 2.1 summarizes the variety of Greek households.

Table 2.1: Greek Households 1592–94 Census

Type of Household	Number of households (percentage)
Nuclear families	70 (34%)
Single women living alone	15 (7%)
Single women in shared household	17 (8%)
Single men living alone	20 (10%)
Single men in shared household	8 (4%)
Widows living alone	15 (7%)
Widows in shared household	30 (14%)
Widowers living alone	0
Widowers in shared household	10 (5%)
Extended families	7 (3%)
Others	16 (8%)
TOTAL	205 (100%)

There were ninety-seven Greek households in Sant' Antonin parish of which thirty-five were nuclear (36 per cent). Of the sixty-five households in San Martin, only twenty (31 per cent) were nuclear. On average, just over one-third of Greeks lived in nuclear households. However, these were not the only kinds of living arrangements. There were single occupancy households, such as widowed or single people living on their own, and multi-occupancy units of a householder plus one or more tenants. A slightly higher number of single men than single women lived on their own, but that was probably because men's wages were higher, and they could afford to do so. Single women lived with their families or in shared accommodation with one or more female friends or relations.⁵

⁴ For household and living arrangements, see Hacke, *Women, Sex and Marriage*; Chojnacka, *Working Women in Early Modern Venice*; Bellavitis, *Famille, genre, transmission à Venise*; and Bellavitis, *Identité, mariage, mobilité sociale*. The average size of households in Florence, based on the *catasto* of 1427, was 3.8 persons, marginally higher than the Greek average; see Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Les Toscans et leurs familles*.

⁵ Chojnacka found 18 per cent of unmarried, working class men lived on their own or

Widows living on their own or in shared houses greatly outnumbered widowers in similar circumstances. Widowers tended to have more money, but they were also more likely to remarry than widows. They also had more help, usually a family member or a servant. It is impossible to gauge how many men were widowers, however. A woman's widowhood always accompanied her name (*vedova* or *vedoa*), but this was not the case with men. The only way to distinguish married men from single men (other than the absence of a spouse) was if the census taker identified the children living with them as their own. In the five parishes, widows headed forty-five households. They either lived alone, or with their children, or with others, or in some combination including some or all of these arrangements. There were only ten identifiable widower-led households, and none of the men lived alone: besides their children, there was always someone else like a mother, a sister, a mother-in-law, or another family member or servants.

Very few Greeks lived in large, extended households. This was not surprising given that these were generally uncommon among sailors and artisans, and anyway, most Greeks were first- and second-generation immigrants from small working-class families. Extended units, where several generations of a family lived under one roof, could be found among all classes, but only seven Greek households fell into this category. Two of these were wealthy families, and five were from the popular classes. Fior was the head of a three-generation household. She shared her home with her sailor husband Dominico, who was probably her second husband since he was not identified as either the household's *capo* or the father of Fior's daughter. The others in the house were Antonia and Zorzi da Tino (Fior's daughter and son-in-law), and the couple's daughter Adrianna and her husband Manusso, who was also a sailor.⁶ The family had no servants, and Manusso and Dominico's occupation probably explains their living arrangements. In Sant' Antonin parish Bernardo and Geronimia Golemi and their three children, Bernarda, Zuane, and Alvise, shared their home with Bernardo's brother Demetri, his wife Adrianna, and their three children. Similarly, Manusso and Maria and their son Nicolò lived with Manusso's

with other single men, while only 8 per cent of women did so: Chojnacka, *Working Women in Early Modern Venice*, p. 15. Hacke however, discovered that 'the presence of households headed by a single woman was greater and more constant in Venetian neighbourhoods than those headed by a single man: twice as many single women headed their own household than men': Hacke, *Women, Sex and Marriage*, p. 25. Hacke also bases her findings on the 1592 census but hers includes a wider spread of parishes throughout the city. This might explain the difference between her findings and Chojnacka's and mine.

⁶ ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 10, Santa Trinità, fol. 109v.

brother Pasqualino, his wife Marina, and their children.⁷ There were eight households of the Litino clan in Venice spread across different parishes in Castello. Litino men were mostly artisans and mariners but everyone, including the women, were engaged in commerce. The Litino had been in Venice since the early 1500s. The best known was Francesco di Demetri, who ran a boarding house for Turkish merchants and eventually became the first guardian of the Fondaco dei Turchi.⁸ His was the largest of the eight households, with nine children from two wives, as well as his late brother's four children. Living nearby were his Cretan kin and two sets of Dalmatian in-laws (one from each wife), their families, and kin. Litino also employed two live-in servants, so in total his household numbered seventeen people.

In San Severo parish the Cypriot notable Bernardo Martinengo was the head of a household that, like Fior's, incorporated three generations. Bernardo's household included his (present) wife Emilia and Maria, his late wife's sister. His granddaughter Emilia and five servants completed the household. Also living in the house, but in their own apartments, was Bernardo's son Piero with his wife Betta, their young son Bernardo, and two servants. In all, fourteen people lived in separate quarters under the one roof.⁹ Three generations of another noble Cypriot family, the Agapito, lived in San Giovanni Nuovo parish. That household had thirteen people: the head of the household, Mathio, his wife Livia, Mathio's son Hector, Hector's thirteen-year-old son, Michiel, and two servants. The Agapito also rented rooms to people unrelated to them. The lodgers were Zorzi di Salvador, a ship's captain, his wife Chiara, their three children, and Andriana, their servant. Another man, Thomaso Papadopulo da Famagusta, lived in the house as well. The relationship between the Agapito and their lodgers was not explained, but in Thomaso Papadopulo's case, the Cypriot connection might have drawn him to this particular place.¹⁰ The Agapito and Martinengo were wealthy and titled nobility. Bernardo and Piero Martinengo were referred to as 'Il Magnifico', and Hector Agapito was 'L' Eccelente', titles reserved for patricians and nobles from the imperial colonies. The families enjoyed a comfortable existence and had several live-in servants, something unusual for most Greek householders who tended to have one servant (usually not a live-in one) or more commonly, none.

⁷ ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 1, Sant' Antonin, unfoliated.

⁸ Burke, 'Francesco di Demetri Litino, the Inquisition and the Fondaco dei Turchi'; Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, pp. 198–200.

⁹ ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 9, San Severo, unfoliated.

¹⁰ ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 2, San Giovanni Nuovo, fol. 4r.

Households like the Martinengo and Agapito were popular among some elite families, but by no means all. Originally the merchant Canachi Cuvli established his family in San Pietro di Castello parish. At some point his eldest son, Andronico, bought his own palazzo in Sant' Antonin, and this became the residence of the eldest son and his family until the mid-seventeenth century. Other Cuvli kin had homes in various Castello parishes, but Andronico di Canachi's branch remained in Sant' Antonin and San Severo parishes, close to each other and to aunts, uncles, and first cousins. Andronico's children, his sister-in-law, his aunt, and first cousins all lived in San Severo close to or next door to each other. Gratosia di Andronico and her husband, Pietro Manolesso, lived in the Calle Larga; nearby, in the Corte Malipiero, were her sisters Isabetta and Ludovica, their aunt, Cecilia Dolfin Cuvli (Andronico's sister-in-law), and the family's Savogian relations. Ludovica, Isabetta, and Aunt Cecilia were next-door neighbours, while the Savogian were a few houses further along the same street. Living close to this enclave of sisters, aunts, and cousins was Lorenzo di Andronico, the only son and heir. Lorenzo and his family stayed in San Severo until Andronico's death in 1589; afterwards he moved his family into the Palazzo Cuvli at Sant' Antonin.¹¹ Like other wealthy families, the Cuvli had large households, usually eight or more people: the couple, their unmarried children (often more than two), one or more other people, and servants. As their many sons and daughters married and established their own homes, some branches of the family spread themselves beyond San Severo and Sant' Antonin into other Castello parishes.

It was common to find couples and single women and men subleasing rooms to compatriots, friends, and strangers. Zissi da Siro and his wife Cattarina rented rooms in their house to Alvise Filarito, his brother Michiel, and Diana, Michiel's wife.¹² Nicolò Nigro and his wife Maria leased to two couples, Piero and Maria Mena and Batista da Bergamo and his wife Maria.¹³ One category defied categorization: households of seemingly unrelated families, groups of unrelated men, and unrelated women, men, and children sharing a hearth. In

¹¹ This pattern of home ownership indicates that at some stage the Cuvli saw an opportunity to buy property — and a lot of it — in San Severo. Quite possibly Andronico Cuvli bought the San Severo houses as part of his children's dowries. It seems highly unlikely that the sisters all married men who lived near each other and close to other Cuvli relations. The Palazzo Cuvli (now Palazzo Salvioni) is at no. 3463 Ramo Salvioni: Tassini, *Curiosità veneziane*, pp. 551–52; Tassini, *Alcuni palazzi ed antichi edifici di Venezia*, p. 238; Bassi, *Palazzi di Venezia*, pp. 246–47.

¹² ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 1, Sant' Antonin, unfoliated.

¹³ ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 2, San Giovanni Nuovo, fol. 6r.

Sant' Antonin parish four very large households of men, women, and children shared lodgings. The census takers recorded the name of the head of household, in each case a man, and then listed but did not name the others: five men, three women, and three children made up Padovan Cipriotto's household; in Zorzi de Malvassia's, there were three men, two women, and four children; the household of Zorzi Marasso de Thodarin had two men, four women, and four children; while in Vallachi's there were two men, four women, and four children. No explanations were offered about the relationships of the tenants to each other or to the head of the household, no clues given about the status of the children, whether they were with parents, relatives, or on their own.¹⁴ This was odd because in all other instances the Sant' Antonin census takers were meticulous about recording names, children's ages, and the relationships between household members. One can only speculate about the people in these four anonymous households. They might have been newly arrived immigrants with little money to spare and in search of temporary accommodation, or people on meagre wages, or single women and men who could not afford to live alone. The average rent in the sestiere of Castello was eight ducats a year, while the average annual wage was ten ducats, which explains the need to share.¹⁵ These kinds of living arrangements existed throughout Venice, not just Castello and not only among immigrants. Dennis Romano found that 'Venetian households could average up to twenty odd people'.¹⁶

The composition and size of Greek households indicates that this was, even in the late sixteenth century, a community in transit, of a people still settling. The number of related and unrelated people sharing homes is evidence of this. This was still mostly a community of small householders. After 1570 and the loss of Cyprus, refugee immigration ceased, and it was not to pick up again till the Cretan War in the mid-seventeenth century. Greeks continued arriving from the other parts of the *Stato da Mar* as well as the coastal cities and islands of the Ottoman Empire, but their numbers were small in comparison to the migrations that characterized the first seventy years of the sixteenth century. After 1570 the growth of the community relied almost exclusively on local marriages and childbirth rather than immigration.

¹⁴ ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 1, Sant' Antonin, unfoliated.

¹⁵ Chojnacka, *Working Women in Early Modern Venice*, p. 3.

¹⁶ Romano, *Housecraft and Statecraft*, p. 113.

Marriage, Children, and Kin

Marriage expanded the immigrant's social, economic, and financial opportunities. It reinforced old ties and created new ones. Many first generation immigrants, when they could, chose partners from their *patrie*, that is, compatriots, rather than 'strangers', or non-compatriots.¹⁷ Like Venetians, Greeks from different socio-economic classes had their own expectations of what marriage was about. The wealthy looked to advance and broaden their economic and social positions. They set wider boundaries, often going beyond their *patria* and wider community in search of suitable partners. *Popolano* men and women tended to look for companionship, a second income, and a level of comfort and familiarity. Most looked for marriage partners within the community and, if possible, among compatriots. Regardless of class, for immigrants marriage provided economic and emotional security in a new place.

Marriage Patterns, Rituals, and Dowries

On 13 March 1544 Giorgio Eugenio and Nicolò Sevasto met with the notary Agostino Pellestrina to work out the marriage contract between Eugenio's daughter Stamatina and Sevasto.¹⁸ The two men were middle-ranking merchants, and the contract they drew up reflected their place in Greek society. The dowry her father provided for Stamatina was quite generous. It was valued at a thousand ducats in cash, furnishings, and other household goods. At the same time, Eugenio moved to safeguard his daughter's place in the marriage. Stamatina was her father's heir (he had no other children) and as such, Eugenio promised Sevasto that he too would have access to his wealth, which included property and cash, but only after his and his wife Marieta's deaths. For whatever reason, this marriage never took place; when Eugenio died sometime before October 1549, his only survivors were Marieta and Stamatina. Earlier, certainly by 1547 Sevasto had married a woman named Bella Remenico, who in May of that year gave him power of attorney to deal with some of her finan-

¹⁷ Unlike English, Greek uses the same word, ξένος (*xenos*), to mean 'stranger' and 'foreigner'. In a Greek context, then, a stranger/foreigner is a person from a place that is different from one's own, or someone who is not from Greece: 'the term ξένοι ("foreigners" / "outsiders") has a range of meanings according to context, but basically it is a category of exclusion and it is used to classify all those who do not belong'; Just, 'Ethnicity and the Village', p. 115.

¹⁸ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10639, Agostino Pellestrina, fols 1r-1v, 13 March 1544.

cial affairs.¹⁹ There is nothing unusual about the two documents; they were common legal contracts between people. Of more immediate interest here was Sevasto's choice of brides. In both instances the women were from his *patria*, Napoli di Romania. In this Sevasto and the Eugenico and Remenico families were following the practice of most Greeks.

Greeks mainly preferred to marry other Greeks, especially people from the same *patria*. A sample of 201 couples showed that 133 of these unions were Greek to Greek. The next most popular partners were Venetians, followed by Dalmatians, then Italians from the *Terraferma*. There were a few de facto relationships, mostly between Greek men and Italian *Terraferma* women. Only one Greek woman, Isabetta, acknowledged her de facto relationship with her Venetian partner, Zuane dal Forno, a wine merchant.²⁰ For the majority of working class Greeks, the preference was definitely for one's own: Alessandra and her husband, Teodoro the shoemaker, were both from Corfu, and the middle-ranked merchant Antonio and his wife Marulla came from Millo. If compatriots were in short supply, then Greek women and men looked for partners beyond their *patrie*. Marina Chiriaculi's family had immigrated from Coron at the start of the sixteenth century, but as the number of Coronites in Venice was very small, Marina married 'out': her first husband, Geronimo, was from Crete, and her second, Alessandro, came from Zante. The middle class too preferred compatriots, particularly those who might open new doors financially and socially. Thus, Alvise della Bionda of Corfu married a fellow Corfiot, Andriana Eparco, the sister of Antonio Eparco, one of his business partners. Antonio Cornaro da Candia arranged for his daughter Fontana to marry his fellow Cretan and business partner, Nicolò Querini. Andrea della Vigna dal Zante married Regina, daughter of Nicolò Novacho dal Zante, with whom he shared a number of commercial interests. Table 2.2 summarizes the variety of marriage patterns.

Naupliots, more than anyone else, chose partners from their *patria*, definitely in the first two generations, less so by the third when immigration from that city had all but ceased. Theirs was a socially cohesive community that was also large enough to offer plenty of choice. Cretans and Cypriots, both more numerous than Naupliots, also preferred marriage to compatriots, but not to the same extent as the Naupliots. This difference in attitude was due to two factors. Cretans and Cypriots had a more intense and personal history of contact with Venetians either through long term, direct rule (Crete) or through the

¹⁹ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10642, Agostino Pellestrina, fol. 102r, 4 May 1547.

²⁰ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 847, Francesco Renio, no. 286, 7 September 1566.

Table 2.2: Marriage Patterns 1498–1600

Status	Number of couples (percentage)
Couples from the same <i>patria</i>	92 (45%)
Couples from different <i>patrie</i>	41 (20%)
Greco-Venetian couples	39 (19%)
Greco-Dalmatian couples	12 (9%)
Greco-Italian couples	8 (3%)
De facto couples	9 (4%)
TOTAL	201 (100%)

many Venetian families that had immigrated to both islands as colonists. For example, Venetian families had settled in Cyprus long before the island became part of the *Stato da Mar* and Venetians moved to Crete soon after Venice acquired it immediately after the Fourth Crusade. This familiarity probably set a pattern of marriages between locals and Venetians. Initially, authorities in Crete forbade intermarriage but eventually accepted it since both locals and settlers ignored the law when it suited them. Napoli di Romania was different. It was a small town with no large, permanent Venetian settler community. The only Venetians Naupliots came into regular contact with were the governor (*rettor*), visiting dignitaries, sailors and some merchants, and naval officials. Quite simply, opportunities for intermarriage with Venetians did not exist to the same extent as they did in Crete and Cyprus. Throughout the sixteenth century, Naupliots, with few exceptions, continued to shun other Greeks, and other subject people and Venetians, as marriage partners.

Preference for the known was not the only factor that determined partner choice however. Affection certainly played a significant part, especially in working class unions. *Popolano* women and men went out to work from an early age, and so had greater opportunities to choose future spouses. A second income was important for working class couples; it meant they could provide for basics like putting food on the table and paying the rent, but it also gave them greater financial security.²¹ Familiarity was also important. Fathers who were friends,

²¹ On the family economy, see Ambrosini, ‘Toward a Social History of Women in Venice’; Chabot, ‘Widowhood and Poverty in Late Medieval Florence’; Chojnacka, *Working Women in Early Modern Venice*, pp. 26–49; Hacke, *Women, Sex and Marriage*, pp. 134–39; Romano, *Housecraft and Statecraft*, pp. 99–105 and 155–77.

work mates, or both arranged marriages between their children and in this way further cemented their friendship by becoming in-laws. Francesco da Cipro, a caulker in the Arsenal, arranged the marriage of his adopted daughter Anna to another caulker, Domenego.²² Nicolò Cocoli and Zuane Gianà were close friends, and their friendship may or may not have been instrumental in the marriage of Cocoli's son Demetri to Gianà's daughter Gabriela.²³ In the end, endogamy was probably an imperative as well as a convenience: it expanded a family's networks while preserving economic, cultural, linguistic, and social links to the homeland. Where population numbers permitted, it was the preferred option.

No laws prohibited unions between Venetians and foreigners, nor did Greeks frown upon out-marriage. The only laws that expressly limited partner choice were those dealing with patrician unions, and these were based on long-standing social, political, and legal traditions. Nevertheless, seriously wealthy Greek families arranged unions with patrician and *cittadini originarii* families. In doing so, they showed that like elites everywhere, family well-being and social and financial success were more important than ethnic origin and religious rite. What was discouraged was a rarity anyway: marriage outside the faith. To date, there is very little evidence of marriages between Greeks and non-Christians. When this occurred, if, for example, a Greek married a Jewish person, the couple would have had to live in the Ghetto unless the Jewish partner converted to Christianity. I found only one example of an interfaith union between a Greek woman and a Muslim who had, however, converted to Christianity, specifically to the Greek rite. The woman, Stamatia, married the Muslim convert (*battizzato*), Andrea Turco, and their names, along with those of their children, appeared in the Greek section of the Sant' Antonin census book.²⁴ A difference of faith required conversion, but a difference of rite did not. In fact, mixed rite couples freely participated in the rituals and traditions of both rites.²⁵

²² ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 171, 6 August 1581 and 9 May 1585.

²³ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 200, 19 June 1578 and codicils 19 August 1578, 30 November 1581, and 6 December 1581.

²⁴ 'Andria Turco, battizzato, sua moglie Stamatina, Zorzi, Stamati, Michagli, Grigori, figli': ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 1, Sant' Antonin, unfoliated.

²⁵ Sally McKee found similar marriage traditions between Cretans and Venetians in the late medieval period when she examined identity and status issues of Cretan women married to Venetians; McKee, 'Greek Women in Latin Households'.

Marriage Ceremonies and Rituals

Greek wedding rituals and ceremonies reflected the customs and traditions of the Eastern rite church, and many of these differed from the Latin church's. Before the Council of Trent (1545–63), a Latin marriage was a legal affair between the couple, their families, their sponsors, and the notary. The parish priest's role was minimal and certainly not mandatory. Ceremonies were divided between the contractual and the festive. After Trent the Church became a more active participant in marriage ceremonies.²⁶ The contractual phase was the same, the focus remaining on the contract as the legal basis for the marriage. The parish priest, however, assumed a pivotal role as the person through whom ceremonies and festivities were concluded:

The same holy Synod exhorts the bridegroom and bride not to live together in the same house until they have received the sacerdotal benediction, which is to be given in the church; and It ordains that the benediction shall be given by their own parish priest, and that permission to give the aforesaid benediction cannot be granted by any other than the parish priest himself.²⁷

The parish priest published the banns and ensured the marriage had the mutual consent of the couple. He performed the ceremony and recorded in the parish register the names of the couple, their witnesses, and the date and place of the ceremony.

The Eastern Church's role in marriage evolved much earlier. Roman law prevailed in the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium), as it did in the West, and marriage laws reflected that tradition. Marriage was a contract between two consenting and free partners and was entered into before witnesses. Initially, Eastern rite marriages were civic affairs. Although the clergy could bless a

²⁶ The Council defined the sacrament of marriage and issued decrees on marriage reform. Before Trent, during the contractual phase of the marriage the dowry was drawn up and signed. Only men participated in this process. With the completion of this phase, the couple was officially engaged, precisely where the story of Stamatina Eugenio and Nicolò Sevesto stopped. The next phase included the exchange of rings in the home of the bride and the groom's presentation of the counterdowry. The couple were now considered married, but the ceremony was not complete until the bride's family and kin accompanied her to her husband's house. Descriptions of rituals and ceremonies before and after Trent appear in Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, pp. 183–92; Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 27–59; Cowan, *Marriage, Manners and Mobility*, pp. 159–64. The Council of Trent decrees on marriage are in Waterworth, *Canons and Decrees*, pp. 192–232.

²⁷ Waterworth, *Canons and Decrees*, p. 198.

marriage, their involvement in the actual ceremonies was nonexistent. This remained the case until the end of the ninth century when the decrees of the Emperor Leo VI (886–912) shifted the focus of marriage from the civil to the religious.²⁸ The clergy were given the responsibility of sanctioning unions, and church courts replaced civil courts in all legal issues concerning marriage.²⁹ But even though Eastern rite marriages were now performed in a church, they still had to be publicly acknowledged. In Venice (before Trent), those Greek couples who wanted to be married in the Eastern tradition had a ceremony in San Giorgio dei Greci or, before it was built, in one of the Latin churches where Greek priests were permitted to officiate. Otherwise, couples followed the Western, civic tradition along with a priestly blessing — if that was what they wanted. After Trent, Greek couples were subject to the same laws that governed Venetians.

Regardless of which church they married in, the couple had to register the wedding with their parish priest. San Giorgio dei Greci was not a parish church and did not keep marriage records until 1599, when it received permission to do so. However, this did not result in an increase in the number of weddings at San Giorgio because Greek couples preferred to marry in their parish churches. Between 1599 and 1650 the Greek church registered between six and eight marriages a year, an average it maintained till 1815 when it ceased keeping records. Yet in one week, 24–29 July 1564, three Greek couples married in San Domenego di Castello; three months later a fourth couple was married there.³⁰ Clearly the parish church was favoured more than San Giorgio.

²⁸ The views of the Eastern church regarding the meaning and purpose of marriage differed from those of the Latin church. In both churches there was a fine line between church teachings and imperial and other secular decrees and the reality of what marriage entailed, especially where dynasties and nobility were concerned. Early Christian theologians like John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus, and the emperors Justinian, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Leo III, and Leo VI defined the main tenets of Christian marriage, including remarriage, widowhood, and consanguinity. Justinian's Code set the ideal age for marriage at fourteen for men and twelve for women but this was later amended by Leo III in *The Ecloga* (AD 726) to fifteen and thirteen respectively. The bibliography on marriage in the Eastern church is extensive. The following selected works cover the theological basis and meaning of marriage, the differences between Greek and Latin marriage traditions, and marriage decrees: Meyendorff, 'Christian Marriage in Byzantium'; Nicol, *Byzantium*; the *Ecloga* of Leo III is reprinted in *Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization*, ed. by Geanakoplos, pp. 266–67.

²⁹ Meyendorff, 'Christian Marriage in Byzantium', pp. 101–04.

³⁰ The marriage registers of San Giorgio dei Greci were published in *I libri di stato civile*, ed. by Manoussacas and Scoulas. There is a description of the archive but no discussion of

Why? The parish was the centre of social and other activities. It encompassed the home, friends, neighbours, colleagues, and in some cases the workplace. Its festivities were part of the rituals of daily life. The parish church was a physical and spiritual presence and for most Greeks it was closer to home than San Giorgio dei Greci. On another level, the popularity of the local church illustrates that differences between the two rites were not yet rigidly set, at least in the popular mind.

While there were differences between the Eastern and Latin churches concerning marriage, there were also similarities. Both traditions accepted the custom of betrothal gifts (counterdowry), the importance of the dowry, the exchange of rings, and the place of witnesses or sponsors (*compari*) who might be friends, work mates, relations, and important people from the parish or the broader community. Neither church demanded that *compari* and the couple be of the same rite: Zorzi d'Andrea da Venezia was *comparo* for Agostino and Lugaretia when they married in San Giorgio dei Greci in July 1602; Alessandro de Nogente da Verona and Vincenzo de Bortolo were two of the *compari* at the wedding of Demetri Condino dal Zante and Maria di Daniele, who also married in San Giorgio.³¹ Both churches agreed on the importance of *compari*, that the bonds between them and the couple were unbreakable and that the couple and their sponsors became spiritual brothers and sisters. Consequently, both churches disapproved of liaisons between *compari*, regardless whether they were marriage witnesses or godparents.

The dowry was a significant part of the ritual of marriage. On a practical level, it enabled the couple to set up their home. Created by the bride and supplemented, where possible, by her family, the dowry was pivotal to a couple's well-being. Most Greek women worked and put together their modest dowries, often with little or no help from their families. Working class dowries consisted mainly of household goods, some cash, and occasionally a small property. They were subject to market forces so their value fluctuated throughout the century. Elisabeta and Zuaneto da Costantinopoli, a rag and bone man (*strazaruolo*), married in the late 1490s; at the time her dowry consisted of a few household

marriage ceremonies or explanations about the mechanics of marrying 'ala greca'. The marriage registry for San Domenego di Castello is in ACPV, San Pietro di Castello, *registri dei matrimoni*, reg. 1, unfoliated.

³¹ *I libri di stato civile della confraternità greca di Venezia*, ed. by Manoussacas and Scoulas, pp. 4, 42.

goods, clothing, and forty ducats.³² Thirty years later, when Caterina da Feltre married Michali da Corfu, a comber (*pettenere*), her dowry included two hundred ducats in cash, clothing, and furnishings.³³ By the second half of the century, the value of working class dowries increased markedly because of inflation, not higher wages. In 1575 Marieta Balbessi's dowry was worth five hundred ducats (her husband was a sailor), but in that same period Anna, a servant married to a mariner, had a much smaller dowry of 250 ducats, and most of that was in household items, not cash.³⁴ Lower middle class women's dowries were slightly higher. Angelica da Coron's was worth five hundred ducats; Marulla da Millo's was six hundred ducats; Zanetta Carvuri, a dealer in second-hand goods, said hers was worth four hundred ducats, two hundred in cash and two hundred in 'things' (*robbe*).³⁵ The value of working and lower middle-class dowries differed even among women from similar socio-economic backgrounds.

A small number of working and lower middle-class women owned property, while a handful owned the homes they lived in. Most of the women in the latter category inherited their homes from their parents, or these had been gifted to them by childless relatives and godparents. Other women owned small plots of land, usually in their *patrie*: they rented these to local farmers, which provided them with a little extra income. Bella di Patrasso inherited the family home in Santa Trinità from her father. The estate Laura Mavrichena brought into her marriage included household furnishings, clothing, a new rug, a large bed, and other furniture, as well as a field out of Parenzo and a vineyard in Corfu. Marietta Tapinò owned several properties in her native Candia which

³² ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 271, Bernardo de Cavagnis, no. 427, 25 October 1523.

³³ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pelestrina, no. 116, 3 October 1548 (Caterina da Feltre). In a notarized document drawn up in June 1550, Caterina's husband Michali confirmed that he had restored to his wife's dowry the 200 ducats he borrowed for a commercial transaction: ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10646, Agostino Pellestrina, fol. 465r, 28 June 1550.

³⁴ The dowry contract (*carta dotis*) between Marieta Balbessi da Cipro and Zorzi di Napoli di Romania is in ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 6503, Paolo de Grandis, fol. 1v, 13 December 1575. The servant Anna's will is in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 840, Marino Renio, no. 99, 4 November 1576.

³⁵ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 43, Avidio Branco, no. 37, 14 November 1533 (Angelica da Coron); ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10646, Agostino Pellestrina, fol. 435r-v, 16 June 1550 (Marulla da Millo); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 201, 25 November 1588, and a codicil 13 December 1588 (Zanetta Carvuri).

she personally administered.³⁶ All three women were comfortable, and their husbands earned good incomes as ships' captains. Bella's family had been in Venice since the mid-1400s; her father was a goldsmith, and the family was well established in Santa Trinità parish. Marietta Tapinò came to Venice as a bride while her birth family remained in Crete. The Cretan properties were part of her dowry, and they remained under her control throughout her life. These examples illustrate that some women had considerable financial power at their disposal.

In the early 1520s patrician dowries were set at three thousand ducats. However, non-patrician elites were not subject to the rules that governed elite Venetian marriage, so when the Cypriot noblewoman Cecilia Podacataro remarried in 1521, her dowry was four thousand ducats.³⁷ By 1525 the upper limit of patrician dowries was adjusted to four thousand ducats. The following year another Cypriot noble, Zegno (Eugenio) Synglitico, count of Rochas, concluded the marriage agreement of his eleven-year-old granddaughter, Maria, in which he pledged a dowry worth 21,000 ducats (Maria eventually married Lorenzo, son of the Venetian patrician Francesco Barbarigo).³⁸ The extent to which dowry size was an important factor in patrician out-marriage is debatable because other factors defined marriage agreements. For example, in 1584 Gratosia di Andronico Cuvli married the patrician Pietro Manolesso. Her dowry was five thousand ducats, whereas the amount set by the state for patrician-to-patrician marriages was six thousand ducats. Furthermore, Andronico Cuvli made several financial demands on his future son-in-law. Among other things, Manolesso had to guarantee the dowry's value, which he did by selling his properties in Crete. Cuvli also insisted that the money from that sale had to be invested in Venice and nowhere else, and made Manolesso promise to only live in Venice. Manolesso agreed to all of Cuvli's conditions.³⁹

³⁶ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 124, Francesco Bianco, no. 138, 29 June 1533 (Bella di Patrasso); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 218, Gianmaria di Cavagnis, no. 255, 1 March 1542 (Laura Mavrichena); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 331, 1 January 1578 (Marieta Tapinò).

³⁷ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 124, Francesco Bianco, no. 167, 16 October 1532. The Podacataro were Cypriot nobility: see Arbel, 'The Cypriot Nobility'.

³⁸ Arbel, 'Greek Magnates in Venetian Cyprus', p. 331.

³⁹ Details about the Cuvli-Manolesso marriage are in Vlasi, 'Two Early Seventeenth-Century Wills', and Burke, 'Our Daughters and Our Future', pp. 182–86. The Cuvli-Manolesso marriage contract is in AAIEV, *Testamenti, Legati, Commisarie e Donazioni*, reg. 217, no. 90b, fasc. 2, doc. 1, fol. 1r–v.

Most Greek men and women did not have the dotal, financial, and inheritance worries of families like the Podacataro, Synglitico, and Cuvli. Working and lower middle-class wills show that couples generally left what cash and possessions they had to each other, husbands restored their wives' dowries, and most wives let husbands keep their portion of the dowry and then allocated the remainder to their children. Working-class women in particular favoured daughters, sisters, and granddaughters more than sons, brothers, and grandsons. The cash component of Marieta's dowry was 150 ducats. Her husband, Stamati, kept his third, and Marieta divided the remainder among her four children. Angelica da Coron divided her dowry equally between her sisters, Helena and Elisabeta, but left nothing to her husband.⁴⁰ Marriage and dowries were fairly straightforward affairs for most Greek couples. They were more complicated among the elite.

Elite Marriages

The wealthy made up a very small proportion of the Greek population, about twenty-five families for the whole of the sixteenth century, but like elites everywhere they dominated the community. They controlled the most important offices in the Greek *scuola*; employed a significant number of their compatriots in their many enterprises; financially supported Greek commercial ventures, such as printing presses and publishing houses; acted as sponsors and patrons for countless people, and gave generously to the Greek church and its charities. Their wealth, acquired over generations, was based on trade but also included property and generous awards, licences, and offices from the state. They were proud of their family histories, linked as they were to the cultural, political, military, and economic history of their homelands. Many of the families had close ties, established over several generations, to Venetian elites. Others acquired elite friends after they moved to Venice. It was logical then that some of these relationships eventually led to marriages.

Family interests included some or all of the following: commerce, colonial administration, the military, and land ownership (especially among the nobility of Cyprus, the Ionians, and the Morea). There is little evidence of close personal relationships between any of the families in this group. With the excep-

⁴⁰ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 218, Gio. Maria Cavagnis, 329, 30 November 1537 (Marieta di Stamati); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 43, Avidio Branco, 37, 14 November 1533 (Angelica da Coron).

tion of the *capi dei stratioti* families, no other Greek elites intermarried. Not surprisingly there were deep tensions amongst them. The Vergi and Cuvli were bitter commercial and personal rivals and barely spoke. Moreote nobility, the backbone of the Venetian light horse, came to blows over territorial rights, old, unresolved feuds, and ethnic rivalries, especially between Albanian and Greek officers and troops; nevertheless, they arranged marriages among themselves as a way of making peace between families. While they did not intermarry or otherwise mix socially, mercantile elites shared the view that marriage was about the continuity and prosperity of the family. Good marriages ensured the acquisition of useful and influential in-laws, new relations, and friends. In selecting suitable partners for their children, the families looked to preserving their identity, reinforcing the legitimacy of their past, and ensuring a prosperous and secure future.

Like their commoner compatriots, Greek elites initially chose marriage partners from their own *patrie*, particularly in the first generation after the family's move to Venice. By the second and third generations, that is, with the marriages of children born in Venice or if born in the *patria* then growing up in Venice, exogamy became common so that most families had at least one, but often more, Venetian in-laws. Military families preferred in-laws from their own social group. Mercantile elites did not, and besides, the intensity of their commercial and personal rivalries made social connections difficult. For example, the bad blood between the Vergi and the Cuvli, partly a result of their commercial rivalry, spilled over into the community.⁴¹ There were no financial or social advantages to such unions, since the families already had wealth and power within the community and intermarriage would not create further benefits. The only way forward was to expand their influence beyond the Greek community and acquire Venetian in-laws and kin. Broader marriage networks indicated a confidence about their place in Venetian society and their acceptance by the Venetian upper classes. They were now part of, not apart from, Venetian society. Marriages between Greek and Venetian *popolani* also reflected this confidence, albeit on a less conscious level and with far fewer benefits.

Integration into elite Venetian society was not easy. Patrician marriage laws were regularly defined and redefined in order to limit out-marriage, to preserve the 'purity' of patrician bloodlines, and to reinforce the uniqueness of patri-

⁴¹ References to the antagonism and animosity between the Cuvli and the Vergi are in Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, pp. 140, 143–44.

cian identity.⁴² The laws covered all aspects of marriage: dowry size, the status of illegitimate sons, the mother's pedigree, the reputation of the bride and her family, and, from the end of the sixteenth century, proof that the (commoner) bride's family had not engaged in artisan labours for two or more generations.⁴³ Again, despite the laws, many elite Venetians chose partners from wealthy local, foreign, and immigrant families living in Venice, the *Terraferma*, and the *Stato da Mar*. The fact is, Greek and Venetian elites had been marrying each other for a very, very long time. In 1419 Maria Renessi, the daughter of the *capo dei stratioti* Cerno, married the patrician Marino Capello di Stefano; Benvenuta Prothimo and Nicolò Zorzi di Francesco married in the late 1430s; between 1489–1511 four noble Byzantine women of the Spandounes family married patricians.⁴⁴ Power, status, familiarity, and wealth combined to draw Greek and Venetian elites to each other. It helped that some elite Greeks traced their lineage to Byzantine nobility or to crusaders of Norman, Catalan, Levantine, and Italian stock, and that their family histories told of long, distinguished service to the Venetian state. Most families also had close ties to Venetian colonial administrators, as well as political, commercial, and diplomatic dealings with the Ottomans; this was particularly true of Moreote nobility.⁴⁵

The Cavopenna of Napoli di Romania were typical of this multifaceted road to success and social acceptability. Cavopenna wealth came from land ownership and commerce. One branch of the family had been seigneurs of Pediada in the Argolid, and another lords of the island of Aegina till 1451, after which the Venetians took it over and put it under the authority of the *rettor* of Napoli di Romania. Family members subsequently worked as interpreters and emissaries for successive *rettori* in their dealings with the Ottomans at nearby Argos.⁴⁶

⁴² Chojnacki, 'Social Identity in Renaissance Venice' and 'Identity and Ideology in Renaissance Venice'; Cowan, *Marriage, Manners and Mobility*, pp. 1–90.

⁴³ An summary of early marriage laws is in Chojnacki, *Women and Men in Renaissance Venice*, pp. 53–75. Laws from the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are in Cowan, *Marriage, Manners and Mobility*, pp. 23–46; 135–67.

⁴⁴ The Prothimo marriage is in ASV, *Balla d'Oro* II, fol. 28r. For the Spandounes marriages, see in Burke, 'Surviving Exile', pp. 113–16.

⁴⁵ O'Connell, *Men of Empire*, pp. 50–56, 62–74.

⁴⁶ Bartolomeo Minio, the *rettor* of Napoli di Romania, was too ill to meet with the new Ottoman governor (*flamburar*) of Argos in March 1483, and sent Olivoto de Cavopenna in his place: *The Greek Correspondence of Bartolomeo Minio*, ed. by Wright and Melville-Jones, pp. 288–89. The origins of the Cavopenna family are unclear; they may have been part of the Catalan companies that overran Greece in the early fourteenth century.

Sanuto quoted from Cavopenna reports on a range of topics such as Ottoman movements in Argolid, Turkish attempts to recruit Venetian-employed *stratioti*, the condition of the fortifications at Napoli di Romania, even the quantity of biscuit which the Cavopenna supplied the Candia fleets.⁴⁷ After 1540 at least three Cavopenna branches settled in Venice. They pursued their mercantile interests, held high offices in various magistracies, obtained *cittadini originarii* status and acquired Venetian in-laws. Their success in the latter was not surprising: the family had been marrying out since the early fifteenth century.

Even before they arrived in Venice, they could count among their in-laws Greek notables like the Prothimo of Negroponte and Venetian patricians from the Ferro, Molin, and Lando families. In Venice they continued the pattern of choosing partners amongst their Naupliot compatriots and patricians. Unlike other elite Greek families, Cavopenna daughters and sons married patricians and Greeks in almost equal numbers. In the early years in Aegina and the Argolid more men than women married out, but in Venice this was closer to half each. By the middle of the 1550s the family had acquired new in-laws from the Michiel, Trevisan, and Bollani families. Ambrogio Cavopenna married the patrician Caterina Lando, and two of their four children also married patricians. One son, Nicolò, married Modesta from the Franco family, but whether she was from the patrician or the *cittadini originarii* branch is not clear. A daughter, Lucretzia, married twice, both times to patricians: Giovanni Trevisan q. Stefano and, after his death, to Giovanni Bolani q. Luigi. At no point did their immigrant status force the Cavopenna family to change the way they chose marriage partners.

Military families, however, had always intermarried at a great rate. In the Morea they had also married out, offering their daughters and sons to important Greek, Frank, and Ottoman families; for example, the sister of *capo dei stratioti* Teodoro Paleologo was married to a high Ottoman official at Mistra.⁴⁸ Ottoman marriages ceased after the Venetians lost the Morea, but marriage within the military class continued to be the preferred option. Sons were encouraged to marry women from military families and to take up the careers of their fathers, grandfathers, and uncles, and most did. Whether this was about maintaining and passing on the military tradition from father to son, or something else, is not clear. In the period 1498–1600 I found only two *capi dei stratioti* who did not marry women from their class. One was Demetri Paleologo di Teodoro and

⁴⁷ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, III, 183; XXIV, 157; XXV, 247, 273.

⁴⁸ Kolyva, 'Teodoros Paleologo', pp. 138–40; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, II, 573.

the other was Mercurio Bua. Demetri had an interesting marriage history. His first wife was Laura Seguro, the daughter of Zachynthian nobility.⁴⁹ In 1533 he was accused of bigamy by a Venetian woman, Lucieta Martini, who claimed to be Demetri's wife.⁵⁰ The matter was settled after a long, acrimonious trial.⁵¹ A few years later, presumably after Laura's death, Paleologo married again — for the last time. His last wife was a Venetian named Pasqua. The couple had two children, Teodoro and Diana.

Mercurio Bua's first wife was Maria Bocali, whose family had been feudal lords of the Morea. She died in Venice in July 1524, leaving a young son, Flavio. A year later, in August 1525, Bua remarried, this time to Elisabetta, daughter of the patrician Alvise Balbi. Sanuto described the ceremony, including the groom's gifts to his new bride:

on this day [...] the wedding of the count Sir Mercurio Bua, widower [and] our *condottiere*, to the daughter of Alvise Balbi of San Zulian. And he [Bua] gave the bride-to-be a sapphire and a small gold chain. The [giving of the] wedding ring completed the marriage.⁵²

A Greek family with patrician in-laws was a truly honourable thing. It announced the family's integration into Venetian elite society, it ensured its continuation, and it fulfilled its ambitions.

Family Tensions: Remarriage

In the Latin church, a marriage was dissolved by the death of the spouse, so there were no theological restrictions on the number of times a person could remarry. In the Eastern tradition marriage was eternal; therefore, a spouse's death did not signify its end. Officially, the Eastern church did not approve of remarriage, but it tolerated it as long as there were no children from the previous marriage, and widows and widowers were forty years or older and were prepared to suffer

⁴⁹ The Seguro were the wealthiest family on the island of Zante. They would have known Demetri's father and uncle through their long tenure as something equivalent to military governors of the island.

⁵⁰ Kolyva, 'Teodoros Paleologo', p. 153.

⁵¹ The annulment is in ACPV, *Cause Matrimoniali*, b. 33, 12 February 1533.

⁵² Sanuto, *I Diarii*, xxxix, 296, August 1525: 'In questo zorno, per via di commission fu fatto uno per di noze dil conte signor Mercurio Bua vedoo (vedovo), condutier nostro, in la fia di sier Alvise Balbi da San Zulian. Et li mandoe a la sposa uno safil et una cadenela d'oro. Verà lui poi qui a compir le noze.'

excommunication for five years. Whether or not this explains low remarriage rates amongst Venetian Greeks is debatable, since most widowed Venetians also chose not to remarry; death and marriage records reveal that fewer than 15 per cent of Venetian widows and widowers remarried, and Greeks remarried at an even lower rate. In a sample of 440 married people from across the social spectrum, only thirty remarried, sixteen women and fourteen men.⁵³ Most of these widows and widowers remarried once, but five (two men and three woman), opted for a third marriage. Many widowed Greeks chose new partners from the same *patria* or ethnic background as the late spouse. Maria Gavradopula's two husbands were Cretans like her. Both of Michali Psara's wives were from his hometown of Napoli di Romania. Zorzi Caristo da Negroponte married three times and in each case chose Venetian women. Francesco di Demetri Litino's two wives came from Dalmatia, and Andriana da Venezia's two husbands were Greeks from Candia.⁵⁴ For others, the new partner's ethnicity was not an issue. Perina da Venezia's three husbands were from Verona, Venice, and Zante. Cecilia Podacataro's first husband was Cypriot, and the second was Venetian. Francesco da Cipro's two wives came from Corfu and Candia, and Teodoro Profetti's from Dalmatia and Napoli di Romania.⁵⁵ Remarriage provided companionship, a second income, and new kin and friends. It could also create problems. Tensions and rivalries were common between parent and child, children, stepchildren and half-siblings, and new and old sets of in-laws. These were not exclusively Greek problems. Perhaps remaining widowed was easier than facing the potential headaches of remarriage.

The stipulation that children and widows remain in the care of the father's family was common to all classes, but it was not as strictly observed among the

⁵³ ACPV, *registri dei matrimoni*, reg. 1, San Pietro di Castello, unfoliated.

⁵⁴ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 594, Girolamo Luran, no. 334, 17 September 1596 (Maria Gavradopula); ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 29, fol. 167v (Michali Psara); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, testamenti in protocollo, fols 34v–35v, 21 March 1581 (Zorzi Caristo); ASV, *Cinque Savii alla Mercanzia*, b. 187, n.s. 'Turchi', unfoliated (Francesco di Demetri Litino); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 1211, Antonio Marsilio, no. 795, 6 March 1549 (Margarita Litino, Francesco's first wife); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 64, 27 June 1580 (Andriana da Venezia).

⁵⁵ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 842, Marino Renio, no. 647, 18 April 1581 and 27 April 1582 (Perina da Venezia). ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 124, Francesco Bianco, no. 167, 16 October 1532 and codicil 8 November 1532 (Cecilia Podacataro). ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 171, 10 November 1576, 6 August 1581, 9 May 1585, 28 May 1585 and no. 176, 10 February 1588 (Francesco da Cipro). ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 842, Marino Renio, no. 735, 17 May 1581 (the will of Vittoria Mondano, Teodoro Profetti's first wife).

lower orders. In immigrant communities this would have been difficult anyway because not everyone had parents, in-laws, and kin nearby. In the absence of family, many turned to friends, neighbours, and sponsors for support. Naturally everyone wanted to keep the family unit together and provided incentives for spouses to remain widowed. Zuane Carvuri offered his advice to his pregnant wife:

I leave, wish and ordain that madonna Chiro, my delectable wife, is and ought to be absolute mistress of each and every one of my properties present and future and in every existing place; nevertheless, she ought to remain widowed and living as a widow. And should she marry I leave her only her dowry and nothing else of my possessions except her clothes which I leave to her.⁵⁶

Carvuri left the day-to-day care of his estate to his nephew, Andronico Cuvli, and instructed Chiro and the children to live with him wherever he wished, ‘be it Zante, Corfu, or any other place (and) with my children.’⁵⁷ There was nothing unusual about this kind of request. Many men left the care of wives and children to family and trusted male friends, and encouraged their wives to remain in the family home as *donna et madonna*. Carvuri had no family or relations of his own in Venice, which explains the choice of a nephew by marriage as guardian of his family. Chiro Carvuri was Andronico Cuvli’s aunt (his father’s sister), so in Carvuri’s case he was giving his wife and children back into the care of her birth family. The merchant Giacomo Malici had a more complicated personal history than Carvuri. His permanent home was Corfu, where he had a wife and daughter. When work brought him to Venice, he lived with his partner, Margarita, the mother of Teodorino and Marina, his Venetian-born children. In the event of his death, Malici asked his brother Zuane, who lived in Venice, to look after Margarita and the children as long as Margarita never married; were she to do so, the children would come under Zuane’s care and presumably Margarita would have to look after herself.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 199, 24 April 1544. ‘Lasso, voio et ordino che madonna Chiro mia consorte dilectissima sii et essere debi dona et madonna et patrona de tuti et cadauni mei beni mobili stabili presenti futuri et in cadaun luogo esistenti viduando perhò et vivendo vidualmente. Et maridondosse io li lasso solamente la sua dotte e non altro deli mei beni salvo li sui vestimenti liquali io li lasso.’

⁵⁷ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 199, 24 April 1544: ‘dechiaro et ordino che la preditta mia moglie debi andare astantiare con messer Andronico soprascritto mio nepote dove lui vora andare o al Zante, Corfu overe in altro loco insieme con li mei fioli.’

⁵⁸ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 2554, Stefano Fuscardo, fols 2v–3v, 4 June 1528.

Some spouses had no qualms about penalizing surviving spouses should they remarry. Michali Greco da Corfu appointed his wife, Caterina da Feltre, his heir and made her responsible for his small estate. However, if Caterina were to remarry, she would forfeit her rights as his heir and would only get twenty ducats and the property that had been part of her marriage contract.⁵⁹ Zuane Gianà gave his wife Justina sole responsibility for raising their children and restored her dowry as set out in their marriage contract. If Justina were to remarry, though, his good friends, Triffon da Cattaro and Nicolò Cocoli, would assume responsibility for his children's upbringing: Justina would only be left with her dowry.⁶⁰ Women too found ways to protect their properties and their children in the event they predeceased their husbands. They did not shy away from putting up barriers to keep a new wife from profiting from their estates. Bella di Patrasso allowed her husband, Zorzi di Santa Maura, to live in the house she owned for the rest of his life. If Zorzi were to remarry, he could bring the new wife into this house, but after his death (presuming he predeceased the new wife), the house would go to the church of San Giorgio dei Greci.⁶¹ The fate of wife number two did not concern Bella, but the fate of the house she had inherited from her father did. Other women said little about their husbands' possible remarriage; instead, they arranged their affairs to ensure their children's inheritance and their place in the home.

⁵⁹ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 769, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 281, 3 October 1548. 'lasso mia sola comissaria dona Catherina da Feltre mia consorte dilectissima laqual voglio sia et essere debi mia herede et ressiduaria universal [...] Se veramente ditta mia moglie si volessi maritare dapoi la mia morte, Io li lasso del mio solamente ducati vinti et lei sui campi de terra che lei mi dette'.

⁶⁰ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 200, 19 June 1578. 'Lasso madona Justina mia consorte dona et madonna governatrice, et comissaria delli mei fioli et facultà vedoando et maridandosi voglio che la debbi haver la sua dote come nella sua carta dotal appar, voglio che se la preditta mia moglie si mariderà siino mei comissarii m. Triffon da Cattaro capitano grande et m. Nicolo ditto Cocoli mei carissimi amici, liquali habbino a governar li mei fioli con la mia pocca facultà che mi attrovo, dovendo loro maritar le mie tre fiole che mi attrovo cioe Livia, Camilla, et Veneranda con quel miglior modo che potranno et che si convien al'haver.'

⁶¹ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 124, Francesco Bianco, no. 138, 29 June 1533. Zorzi did not survive Bella for long and never remarried. The *scuola* sold the house after his death and invested the money from the sale in the church building fund: Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, p. 56.

Family Tensions: Children

One of the most common sources of family tension was parent–child and inter-sibling relations. By setting conditions and limits, parents hoped to avoid problems, especially those that might arise after their deaths. They set out in writing what they expected from their offspring and did not shy away from a bit of ‘inheritance blackmail’ to rein in unruly children. Demetri Eugenio da Negroponte insisted that his son Nicoletto return two gold rings he had borrowed from him (to use as collateral) if he wanted to receive anything from Demetri’s estate. Eugenio’s tone suggested the young man had been somewhat indifferent about this and other financial matters. In the end Eugenio left Nicoletto a few small items of value but named his daughter, Agnesina, his heir and demanded neither Nicoletto nor anyone else challenge or trouble her.⁶² Some parents went so far as to threaten disinheritance and eternal curses on unruly children. Antonio Cornaro was anxious to curb the troublesome behaviour of his oldest son, Anzolo, whom he vowed to disinherit and curse if he did not mend his ways: ‘the aforesaid Anzolo, my son, cannot and ought not bother any of my beneficiaries [...] under pain of privation and of my curse.’⁶³ Cornaro divided his estate evenly among his four children, but only Anzolo was singled out for special mention. Costantino Cuvli implored his younger brother Nicolò ‘to be an obedient and respectful son’ to their father Canachi.⁶⁴ Martha Raphthi disinherited her daughter Dorothea: the girl, not yet fifteen, had not only run away from home and married her lover, she had done so without Raphthi’s consent. By her actions, Dorothea had blackened the family name, and Martha had no alternative but to punish her severely. She cut out Dorothea from her estate, though she did leave her five ducats.⁶⁵ Raphthi men were *capi dei*

⁶² ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 125, 1 May 1549: ‘El ressiduo de tuti et cadauni mei beni [...] lasso ad Agnesina mia fia [...] laqual istituisco ressiduaria universal in tuti et cadauni mei beni mobili stabili presente futuri et in cadaun luogo existeni [...] dechiarondo che niuno non possi molestare ditta mia fia delle cose che si atoverano in la sua cassa pregando ditto Nicoletto mio fiol che dapoi la mia morte la sua sorella li sia aricomandata: et la aricomando anche alli mei comissarii.’

⁶³ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 2, 13 April 1535. ‘Lasso et ordino che el soprascripto Anzolo mio fiol non possi nè debe molestare alcuno de li mei beneficiati et legatari nel presente mio testamento sotto pena de privation et de la mia maledition de quanto li lasso per questo mio testamento.’

⁶⁴ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 79, Carlo Bianco, no. 289, 19 March 1557.

⁶⁵ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 196. Marc’Antonio de Cavagnis, no. 780, 27 February 1566. ‘Io privo Dorothea mia fia delli mei beni per essermi sta desobediensia et havessi maridata

stratioti and Dorothea's behaviour would have brought shame to the family and its relations.

Recalcitrant and disobedient children were not the only problems affecting parent-child relationships. Other causes of family tensions were formal and informal adoptions, problems between step-parents and stepchildren, the status of illegitimate children, and the plight of orphans. Greeks adopted both Venetian and Greek children but gave preference to the latter. In some cases, adoption was done informally, as in a couple taking care of a child whose parents had died; or it was done formally through one of the city's orphanages. The *capo dei stratioti* Teodoro Paleologo had eight children of his own, but after the deaths of his brother, his wife, and his eldest son, this grew to twenty-one children under his care; Francesco di Demetri Litino raised his own and his late brother's children, so that there were thirteen children in his household; Caterina da Corfu left everything to her husband, Manoli Mina da Napoli di Romania, on the condition that he raise her adopted daughter and provide her with the dowry she had set aside for her.⁶⁶

Young children from previous marriages remained with their parent and the parent's new spouse. As well, many men and women looked after stepchildren after their spouse's death. This did not mean that acceptance of someone else's offspring was universal. Concerns were always being raised about children of second and third marriages. There was always the possibility of tension between them and the step-parent and his or her children, and between them and their half-siblings. Parents tried their best to ensure that all their children were looked after. They implored them to have good relations with each other and, like Cornaro and Eugenio, offered inducements and punishments to temper their behaviour. Andriana da Venezia had a son and daughter by her first husband, Manoli da Rettimo, and a son and two daughters by her second husband, Stamati. By the time she made out her will in June 1580, she was a widow again. Andriana died less than a month later and, as hers and Stamati's children were still very young, she entrusted them to her mother's care. She left to Fiorenza and Betta, her daughters by Stamati, the dowries she had set aside for them. The *residuum* of her estate went to Antonio, hers and Stamati's

senza mio consentimento et licentia avanti li anni 15 della sua età et fugita de casa mia con grande vergona.

⁶⁶ For Litino, see his petition in ASV, *Cinque Savii alla Mercanzia*, b. 187, n.s. 'Turchi', unfoliated and Burke, 'Francesco di Demetri Litino, the Inquisition and the Fondaco dei Turchi', pp. 81–84; Caterina da Corfu's will is in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 840, Marino Renio, no. 218, 8 April 1578.

son. Having experienced or foreseeing trouble between Stamati's and Manoli's children, Andriana made plans to ensure the younger children's inheritance and to protect them from possible trouble from their half-siblings. She left nothing to Simon and Gerolema, hers and Manoli's children, as both had married and inherited their father's estate. She asked Simon to replace some silver and other items he had borrowed from his half-sisters' dowries to raise money for a commercial venture and gave her executors the authority to recover these if he failed to do so. Finally, she admonished Simon and Gerolema not to bother the executors of her estate because all the things she now owned had been acquired with Stamati.⁶⁷ Andriana was acutely aware that the existence of two sets of children could cause problems and hoped to avoid these by leaving precise instructions in her will.

The matter of sorting out children's inheritance and rights required even more careful planning when more than two spouses and their offspring were involved. Zorzi Caristo da Negroponte had to juggle three wives and five children, which he did in a satisfactory manner. Like Andriana da Venezia, he gave the bulk of what was left of his estate to his youngest family, since the older children had already been settled on. A small cash gift went to Eugenia, his daughter by his first wife Bortola, since the girl had already inherited her mother's dowry when she married. He and his second wife, Camilla, had two sons, Giacomo and Nicolò, and after her death the boys received a hundred ducats from her estate. Zorzi then married a third time, to Samaritana, and the couple had two daughters, Isabetta and Anzola. Caristo gave the youngest children 150 ducats each and some household items to divide among themselves and Giacomo and Nicolò. He warned his sons against harassing the executors of his estate, their half-sisters, and stepmother. Samaritana was entitled to keep all the household furniture and furnishings since they were from dowry.⁶⁸ In this way, Zorzi hoped to avoid trouble and protect Samaritana.

One successfully blended family was Perina's. Here was a woman with many young people in her life, all of them loved. She was not Greek. She had married

⁶⁷ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 64, 27 June 1580. 'Dechiaro che Simon mio fiol et del sopraditto maestro Manoli ha impegnato parte delle sopraditte robbe et arzeni, però voglio chel sia obligato à despegnarle, et che li mei commissarii lo possano astrenzer a recuperarle. Item dechiaro che non lasso cosa alcuna al ditto Simon nè a Gerolema sua sorella perchè [...] hanno havuta la robba del detto q. ser Manoli suo padre, et anco della mia, però non voglio che mai in alcun tempo possano molestar la mia comessaria perchè tutta la robba che ho è stata del mio secondo marito padre delli sopraditti Fiorenza, Betta et Antonio.'

⁶⁸ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, fols 34v–35v, 21 March 1581.

three times, to men from different *patrie*. All her husbands were mariners. The first, Bastian, was from Verona; the second, Iseppo, from the Friuli; and the third, Stamati, was a Greek from Zante. She shared her home with her youngest daughter Ancilla; Stamati and his sons, Helia and Michelino; and an orphaned goddaughter, Cypriana. The family circle also included her nieces, Caterina and Marina (her late brother's daughters), and their children. Her eldest daughter, Isabetta, was married and lived separately with her own family. Perina's social circle included Greeks and non-Greeks. She was a caring mother, stepmother, godmother, grandmother, great-aunt, and friend. Unlike some families with stepchildren, Perina treated all hers like they were her own. Stamati and Isabetta were the executors of her estate and each received a cash gift, Stamati's 'as a sign of my love' and Isabetta's in thanks for nursing her during a recent outbreak of the plague.⁶⁹ The bulk of her estate went to her daughters, but Perina did not forget her stepsons and gave them generous cash gifts as a sign of her love. The young men, mariners as well, got less than her daughters, but that was to be expected. She left her grandson a small inheritance and showered her goddaughter with gifts and cash to enable her to establish her own home when the time came. Perina was certainly comfortable and chose to share what she had with those closest to her.

Like everyone else, Greek attitudes to illegitimate children depended on the parent and her/his family. Both *popolano* and wealthy families like the Vergi, Cuvli, Samariari, and Savogian had illegitimate children to look after. The treatment of these children usually depended on whether the parent, usually the father, accepted them or not. If a couple did not have children of their own, then things were often better for everyone concerned, especially the children. Several women who did not or could not have children looked after their husband's illegitimate offspring. Whether they did this out of love for the children or because they were told to was not always made clear. The patrician Giacomo Salamon expected his wife Pretiosa Dondi to look after his four illegitimate children. Salamon recognized the children (they lived with him and Dondi) but never identified their mother(s). The couple had no children of their own, and Giacomo, who was an admiral of the fleet, insisted Pretiosa care for them during his long absences. Among other things, she was expected to find a husband from a suitable patrician family for his daughter Cecilia. The girl had a generous dowry including property on Corfu that had been part of her father

⁶⁹ Perina made two wills within a year of each other: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 842, Marino Renio, no. 647, 18 April 1581 and 27 April 1582.

and Pretiosa's nuptial agreement.⁷⁰ What Pretiosa made of all this we shall never know. However, we do know another Greek woman's feelings for her husband's illegitimate daughter. Marieta Tapinò raised Regina, the daughter her husband had with his Moor slave, Anesa. Marieta loved Regina dearly ('per l'amor che io li porto'), made her heir to her estate, and insisted Regina treat her mother properly. Tapinò and Dondi were childless women, and their husbands' offspring may have given them a great deal of pleasure; this was certainly the case with Marieta, who was very generous to Regina and always spoke of her affectionately. She also got on very well with Anesa, who cared for her till her death in January 1593. The Tapinò household was an interesting *menage à trois* throughout the marriage. Zuane Tapinò loved Anesa till the day he died. At some stage he must have freed her because after Marieta's death, he made her his heir and the executor of his estate 'per amore et buona compagnia [...] cinquanta anni che la è con mi' (for love and good companionship [...] fifty years that she is with me). The fate of young Regina is unknown, and there was no mention of her in her father's will.⁷¹

With others though, the presence of legitimate and illegitimate children in a family was cause for concern. Jacomo Malici's two families lived in different places, but most people did not have this luxury. In some instances, parents rejected their natural children, or denied they existed or kept the child's existence from their partner, or worse. In separate instances, Petrisa Mascarogni and Michali Psara both lied about the status of one of their respective children when they applied for state assistance. When the authorities (and in Psara's case, his wife), found out about the deception, it was the children who were punished, not the offending parents.⁷² The fate of illegitimate children often depended on the attitude and the social standing of the male parent. For example, the baptism of the illegitimate son of Mercurio Bua, *capo dei stratioti*, was a grand affair attended by very important people. Sanuto, who was at the ceremony, recorded it in detail. The godparents were the patricians Alvise da Canal and Marco da Pesaro. The child was baptized 'with great triumph, trumpets, pipes and all the music that one could find'. After the ceremony, 'there was a sol-

⁷⁰ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 577, Nicolò Licino, no. 192, 15 February 1537. Salamon's sons inherited his property on Cephalonia which had been awarded to Salamon by the Council of Ten: Chojnacki, 'Identity and Ideology in Renaissance Venice,' pp. 278–80.

⁷¹ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 331, 1 January 1578. Zuane Tapinò died almost three years after Marieta: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, Gianpietro Anzelieri, b. 11, no. 248, 1 August 1593.

⁷² For the details of both cases, see pp. 153–55.

emn dinner with jesters and all the music and [all the] talent one could find'.⁷³ There was no mention of the child's mother.

Nicolò Cuvli looked after Ruberto Tenuto, his illegitimate son, and set aside 450 ducats for him. Ruberto did not live with his father even though Nicolò and his wife, Cecilia Dolfin, were childless. In fact, Ruberto never became part of the family.⁷⁴ The Cuvli and its kin had a good number of illegitimate offspring, all acknowledged and loved, all part of the wider Cuvli circle, and all remembered in family wills. Except Ruberto. Aside from Nicolò, his father, no other Cuvli mentioned Ruberto. It was as if he had never existed. At least Nicolò Cuvli left his son with a generous legacy. Unfortunately, there were other men who showed no kindness to their illegitimate offspring. Over the years Zuane Gianà sought to deny his illegitimate son Nicolò. Initially, Gianà had acknowledged the boy and in 1571 invested a hundred ducats for him in the Zecca to have after Gianà's death. At the time Gianà had two children by his wife, but seven years later, there were six legitimate Gianà offspring. At that point Zuane Gianà decided to cut Nicolò out of the original gift, leaving him with only ten ducats and some tools, weapons, and clothing.⁷⁵

Fortunately, not everyone was as miserable as Zuane Gianà. Most families with illegitimate children behaved responsibly. The men recognized their child, acknowledged its mother, and provided for both. Giacomo Malici treated his legitimate and illegitimate children as equals. Each daughter received three hundred ducats towards her dowry and his son got two hundred ducats. Valentina da Udine was heavily pregnant when she drew up her will in 1547. She named her husband, Andrea da Corfu, her heir and added: 'If I die without children [...] the *residuum* (of Valentina's estate) after my husband's death should be Bortolo's the natural son of my husband.'⁷⁶ Giacomo Samariari left

⁷³ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, xxiv, 179: 'con gran triumpho, trombe, pifari e tutte le musiche che si pol trovar, fu batizato uno fiol bastardo, di messi _____ (left blank), portado vestito in brazo, dil conte Mercurio, nominato Pyro. Fo compare alcuni zentilhomeni, sier Alvise da Canal, q. ser Lucha, sier Marco da Pexaro q. sier Hironimo e altri [...]. E poi le menò a disnar con lui, dove fe'uno solemissimo pranzo, con bufoni e tutta la musica e virtù si pote trovar.' The baptism took place on 20 April 1517. At the time, Bua had a (legitimate) son, and a wife.

⁷⁴ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 478, Paolo de Grandis, no. 425, 12 March 1574. 'lasso anco à Ruberto Tenuto altre volte il mio fiol natural sia lo non sia per l' anima mia uno mandato di Zecca di ducati quatrocento e cinquanta (450) il qual li sia schrito in suo nome con chondicion non possi disponer del cavedal ma tira il pro fino ala francatione.'

⁷⁵ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 200, 19 August 1578.

⁷⁶ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 769, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 411, 17 July 1547. 'Se

money to Elena, his brother Marco's natural daughter; Demetri Vergi acknowledged his brother Alexandro's natural child and left her fifty ducats in his will, but gave Alexandro's legitimate daughters a hundred ducats each. Moysa Gudelli spoke of the deep love and gratitude she felt for her brother's illegitimate daughter Anzola, who was her support, carer, and sole heir.⁷⁷

Exogamous Unions

Sixty-five per cent of Greek families were of two Greek parents that produced Greek children who grew up in a private world that was Greek and a public one that was not. In these families, retention of the customs and traditions of the *patria* came naturally. What then of the 35 per cent exogamous marriages? An examination of ten Greek to non-Greek marriages yields some interesting results. In each case, at least one child, and in some instances more than one, chose or had chosen for them a marriage partner from the father's ethnic background. Fiorenza, one of the daughters of Andriana da Venezia and her second husband Stamati dal Zante, was promised in marriage to Stamati's compatriot Andrea dal Zante. Gabriela Gianà, one of Zuane Gianà's daughters, had a Dalmatian mother, but she married a Greek, Demetri Cocoli. Both of Francesco Litino's wives were Dalmatian, and three of his children chose partners from their mothers' people while one married a Greek. This small sample, by no means conclusive, shows that while most offspring of ethnically mixed working and middle class couples tended to marry people from the father's community, they did not exclude marriage from the mother's.

This was not the case among elites, where children of Greco-Venetian unions drew partners only from the father's line. All the children of Emilia and Efrosina di Teodoro Paleologo, wives of the patricians Stai Balbi and Girolamo Bembo respectively, married patricians. Arsenia Cavopenna's father was a Naupliot notable and her mother, Laura Bon, a wealthy Venetian, and Arsenia married her father's compatriot, Francesco de' Medici d'Attene. Ludovica Cuvli married Almoro Finetti whose people were *cittadini originarii*, and their son's spouse came from that class too. In every instance, when a Greek woman of means married an elite Venetian, the children took partners from the father's side. And in almost all instances, when an elite Venetian woman married a

veramente Io morisse senza fioli voglio che il mio residuo dapoi la morte de ditto mio marito sia de Bortolo fiol natural de mio marito.

⁷⁷ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 1204, Bonadio Marin, no. 241, 10 June 1546.

Greek, their children's spouses were compatriots of their fathers. The importance of the father went further. Many Greek women from military families married patricians, but not a single one of their sons took up the careers of their maternal grandfathers, uncles, and (male) cousins to become *capi dei stratioti*. Conversely, all the sons of *capi dei stratioti* (regardless of the ethnic background of the mother) became commanders themselves, just as the sons of the mercantile elite entered the commercial professions. There were several reasons why this was so. Class and lineage were important, especially as rights and privileges passed through the male line. It was the father's background that determined the working life and social world of his children. The choices open to children of the elite had more to do with patriarchy and tradition than ethnicity.

At no time did men and women lose their identity when they married outside their ethnic group. The Venetian wives of Greek men, women like Cecilia Dolfin, Laura Bon, and Caterina da Feltre, did not stop being Venetian when they took Greek husbands. While their children embraced many aspects of their fathers' identities, they were also very familiar with their mothers'. Alvise Finetti's father was Venetian, but Alvise, his wife, and daughters had a close and loving relationship with his mother's family, the Cuvli. Regardless of whom they married and what friends they had, Greeks continued to speak Greek, to hold to their customs, and, for the majority, to live according the Eastern rite. Tolerance of the other was the accepted norm, and a balance was set to accommodate, in fact blend, all traditions. Whether this was by accident or by design is open to debate.

The family defined who one was and to whom they belonged. It was never a rigid institution: it changed and adapted to new circumstances and incorporated new ways. Over time Greeks evolved from immigrants to permanent residents. They adopted Venetian customs and adapted some of their traditions to fit into a broader Greco-Venetian setting. Some married non-Greeks or acquired non-Greek kin. Most had non-Greek friends, *comapri*, and *parenti*. In the sixteenth century the Greeks, while still settling and adapting, were also reaching out to the wider community.

Old and New Friends

The incorporation of friends expanded people's social circles beyond family and kin. In immigrant communities, friends were more than good companions because often they filled the vacuum created by the absence of family and kin. A sample of 250 Greeks showed that only twenty-five (10 per cent) had both

family and kin in Venice. However, all 250 had friends who were important to their well-being. In fact, some early modern writers believed friends were more trustworthy than blood and marriage relations. The Florentine Giovanni Morelli attributed his father's commercial success to his 'friends and not relatives'. Morelli was a rather miserable man. He warned his sons about the unreliability of relations, even of friends, and urged them to accumulate wealth since it was 'the best friend and the best relative there is'.⁷⁸ Not all writers shared Morelli's views. Instead, they attributed to friendship positive qualities like love, mutual support, and companionship. A good circle of friends gave one the opportunity to make more friends. The writer Pietro Aretino expressed this positive view in a letter to Francesco dell'Arme, in which he described the qualities that made Francesco a good friend:

My dear friend, having thought that I was excluded from your memory, I have been overjoyed to hear not only that I still live there, but also, in consequence, dwell in that of others. This does you honour, because as you value old friends you acquire new ones, and so you act with true nobility in tune with your own nature, which has always delighted in friendship. In fact, no one can know the warmth and intimacy of comradeship if he has not experienced it with you.⁷⁹

Friendship presumed mutual obligation. Friends were 'a ready source of obliging intermediaries' and could be called upon in times of need.⁸⁰ More so than family and kin, friendship crossed class and ethnic lines. The workplace brought together people from a variety of backgrounds and over time relationships were formed. The Arsenal employed large numbers of people from different backgrounds, many of who became friends. Friendship then was part of the world of work and the brotherhood of the guild and the *scuola*. Masters and servants could also be friends, but no matter how close their bonds, theirs was often an unequal relationship. Isabetta Cuvli was exceptionally close and generous to Paolo Cinelli, the manager of her mainland properties. She gave Cinelli a fully furnished house to live in rent-free for the remainder of his life, an income from her country estate at Frasinella, half a *botte* of wine per day for the rest of his life, and five hundred ducats worth of furniture of his choice from her house in San Pietro di Castello

⁷⁸ Morelli, *Ricordi*, pp. 149, 279. Morelli did not eschew relations altogether: the acquisition of *parenti* was important too, he told his sons.

⁷⁹ Aretino, *Selected Letters*, p. 88.

⁸⁰ Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, p. 89.

parish.⁸¹ Gifts like these to servants, tradesmen, and others served many purposes. They recognized loyalty and service and were inducements to servants, managers, and factors to remain in the employ of the master. They enabled recipients to live well and to pray (presumably out of gratitude) for their benefactors' souls; it was a popularly held belief that God listened more to the prayers of the poor than those of the rich. Despite class and other differences, genuine friendships could and did exist between employers and employees.⁸²

Greeks were friends with their compatriots and also with other subject people, and Venetians, foreigners, kin, neighbours, and colleagues. Some of Giacomo Caravella's closest friends were his commercial partners. He was particularly close to the brothers Francesco and Domenico Donado (Donà), grandsons of the late doge Francesco Donà, and appointed them trustees of his estate. Other notables in his friendship and commercial circle included Giacomo and Zuane da Mosto and the Cretan patrician Matthio Calergi.⁸³ Giacomo Samariari referred to an uncle and a nephew as 'good friends' (*buoni amici*), meaning that the kin relationship was one of friendship but also one of obligation. In Samariari's case the uncle and nephew were obliged to pay for masses for the repose of Samariari's soul.⁸⁴ Friendship implied bonds of loyalty, too. Costantino Papagianni's closest friend was Andrea Bergamasco, who Papagianni referred to as *mio fratello giurato* (also *fratello zurado*); the closest translation of this term is 'my sworn brother'. Whether Bergamasco and Papagianni went through a brotherhood ritual or whether they merely called each other 'sworn brothers' out of love and respect was not made clear. What is certain is that

⁸¹ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 440, Giovanni Figolin, no. 296, 26 June 1593. The house Cuvli gave Cinelli was in San Iseppo parish: 'Lasso al mio servitor Paulo Cinelli per tanta bona servitù che ha fatto [...] una casa posta à San Iseppo in vita sua.' The other gifts are in her second will. ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 382, Federico Figolin, no. 148, 20 January 1604: 'et li altri stara quatro del detto livello li lasso a Paulo Cinelli mio di casa, et meza botta de vino fino che'l vive.'

⁸² Romano, 'Aspects of Patronage', p. 714.

⁸³ Caravella described his commercial, family, and friendship alliances in his three wills and a codicil: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 393, Marc'Antonio Figolin, no. 413, 25 March 1565 and 12 May 1574 (first will and the codicil) and no. 473, 26 September 1570 and 13 April 1574 (second and third wills).

⁸⁴ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 204, 9 April 1580. 'Item lasso chechini cento che siano mandati al Zante a messer Zuane Paulopulo et a messer Anastasio Paulopulo barba et nepote li quali siano obligati far dir una messa per tutte le chiese che saranno nel borgo dal Zante per una volta sola per l'anima mia et che li diano soldi vinti per messa et il restante che avancerà sia de tutti doi la mità per homo perchè mi sono stati buoni amici.'

the relationship between them was close. In April 1580 Papagianni was very sick, and fearing he would not recover, he made a will. He was living in the Bergamasco house and Andrea and his wife, Lugretia, were caring for him. He left half of his estate to the church of San Giorgio dei Greci and the other half went to Andrea, and in the case of his death, to Lugaretia.⁸⁵ Atanasio Vlisco da Negroponte took friendship one step further, asking to be interred in San Giovanni in Bragora, which was not his parish church. He wanted to be buried 'in the tomb of the late priest Christoforo Rizo who was the parish priest of the said church (San Giovanni in Bragora)' because he and Rizo had been close friends for a long time.⁸⁶ Vlisco was also close to two brothers from the patrician Giustiniani family. His association with them went back many years, and at some point the Giustiniani had helped Vlisco purchase his house.

Women acquired friends in the same way as men, from the neighbourhood, the workplace, from other acquaintances, and from their own and their friends' households. Like men, women's friendship circles included people from all walks of life. Anzola Barbarigo was a sailor's wife. The couple had an adopted daughter, Lucieta. The three shared their home with two nephews and nieces from the husband's side of the family. Anzola had a large circle of friends and acquaintances among them two patricians, Andrea Grimani and Lorenzo Barozzi. She did not explain her relationship to these men, but as she was a servant, they could have been past or present employers. Her dearest friend was Paola (*mia amorevole amica*), the person she trusted most to care for Lucieta should anything happen to Anzola.⁸⁷ Zuana da Cipro was also a servant. She

⁸⁵ 'infermo del corpo giacendo in leto nella casa della habitation de messer Andrea Bergamasco ditto Tromba mio fratello giurato [...] Lasso la mità de tutti et cadauni mei beni mobili et stabili [...] alla ditta chiesa de San Zorzi de Greci, et l'altra mità al sopraditto Andrea Bergamasco mio fratello giurato il qual voglio sii mio solo comissario et del presente mio testamento essecutor [...] et voglio che [...] Andrea Bergamasco morisse la mità della mia heredità che li lasso sii de Lugretia sua moglier, et morendo lei vadi a lii': ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 92, 16 April 1580. Papagianni survived, and five years later he married and drew up a new will. Neither Bergamasco nor Lugretia featured in that one. They may have died, or, having married and produced an heir, Papagianni chose to leave his estate to his family: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 117, 31 August 1585.

⁸⁶ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 4, 25 Sept. 1536. 'Item voio et ordino chel mio corpo quando serà separato da l'anima sii seppultro nela giesia de San Giovanni Bragola de Venexia nela sepultura del q. messer pre[te] Xoforo [Christoforo] Rizo fo piovan nela ditta giesia. Et questo per la longa amicitia che ho habuto longo tempo cum el perfato messer'.

⁸⁷ Barbarigo made two wills: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 593, Girolamo Luran, no. 20, 4

worked for the Soderini, a wealthy Cypriot family. Her friends were the servants in her own and the other Soderini homes, local merchants and Soderini daughters, daughters-in-law, female cousins, and nieces.⁸⁸ Maria Manzona's friendship circle included the shopkeepers of her neighbourhood. She and her late husband were wine merchants, and after his death Maria ran the business on her own. Her closest friends were the other neighbourhood shopkeepers and their families.⁸⁹

Elites too had very wide social circles that included people outside their class. Maria Paleologina Prothimo's friends reflected her status as the daughter of Byzantine nobility and the widow of a nobleman. Her friends were Venetian, Negropontian, and Byzantine elites, men and women from the Eugenico, Paleologo, Boldù, Sguromalli, Salamon, and Ralli families. Demetri Eugenico and his brother Zuane were her confidants; the Eugenico, like the Prothimo, had served Venice loyally in Negroponte for generations. She relied on the patricians Giacomo Boldù and Giacomo Salamon for financial advice. Her two closest female companions were Pretiosa Dondi (Salamon's wife) and Theodora Ralli, whose family was, like Maria's, Byzantine nobility. Incorporated into Prothimo's world was her household staff, her friends' children and servants, her goddaughters, and other women from her friends' social circles.⁹⁰

One of the most significant acts of friendship was sponsorship because it reinforced non-blood ties and created spiritual bonds between people. Godparents (*compari*) were somewhere between blood and affined kin and friends because they were more than friends but not quite kin.⁹¹ When Aretino chose his friend, the artist Sebastiano del Piombo, to be godfather to his daughter Adria, he did so because

[Although] our brotherly affection needs no more links, I wanted to bind it with those of godfather, so that your gentle and holy ways may adorn the friendship which virtue itself has established for ever between us.⁹²

December 1581; b. 593, no. 29, 20 May 1587.

⁸⁸ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 344, ZN Doglioni, no. 325, 30 April 1613.

⁸⁹ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 158, Antonio Brinis, no. 702, 19 June 1586 (will) and 21 June 1586 (codicil).

⁹⁰ On the social world of Prothimo and other Byzantine nobility in Venice, see Burke, 'Surviving Exile', pp. 118–26.

⁹¹ Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, pp. 90–92.

⁹² Aretino, *Selected Letters*, p. 94.

Parents selected their children's godparents from within or outside their social class. The ties between godparent and godchild were like those of parent and child. Indeed, when the Florentine patrician Giovanni Rucellai was negotiating the marriage of his son Bernardo to Nannina de' Medici, he had to secure permission from the church for the union to take place because Nannina's father Piero was godfather to Bernardo.⁹³ However, godparenting served other purposes besides the spiritual. For one, it offered security to children who had lost one or both parents. Anastasia Zimbletto da Cipro appointed the patrician and procurator of St Mark's, Giacomo Renier, as one of the trustees of her estate, and asked him to care for Laura, her two-year-old daughter, should Zimbletto's die (she was unwell at the time). Renier was one of Laura's godparents. Zimbletto was a widow, and the only family she had in Venice was her father and Laura. She did not say how she knew Renier, but their spiritual connection offered protection for her young child.⁹⁴ For childless couples a godchild was someone they could look after, maybe raise, as well as someone to look after them in sickness and old age. It was common then to find godchildren living with godparents, even if their own parents were alive. Marco Dimitropulo had no one in Venice, and considered his godson Zuane dal Zante, and Zuane's wife and children, as family.⁹⁵ Bella di Patrasso and her husband Zorzi were childless, but Bella had two goddaughters, Anzola and Helena. Helena lived with the couple, and Anzola lived with her parents. Bella provided for the young women's dowries: cash, clothing, and, for Helena, a very large bed.⁹⁶ Not all godparents were this generous. The surgeon Manoli Alemano left his goddaughters, Perina and Anzoleta, ten ducats each towards their dowries. Isabetta Cuvli Londano gave her three godchildren some cash and a personal item such as clothing or furnishings.⁹⁷

Venice's dependence on the sea meant many men were away for long periods of time. Consequently, women had to deal with their own work, their homes and children, and with the absent husband's affairs. All *popolano* women faced

⁹³ Kent, *A Florentine Patrician and His Palace*, p. 29.

⁹⁴ AAIEV, *Testamenti e Donazioni con processi*, b. 18, Zuane Draghi, fasc. 231, 23 May 1602.

⁹⁵ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 314, 13 September 1579.

⁹⁶ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 124, Francesco Bianco, no. 138, 29 June 1533.

⁹⁷ AAIEV, *Testamenti e Donazioni con processi*, b. 18, Francesco Renio, no. 231, 29 August 1563 (Manoli Alemano); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 440, Giovanni Figolin, no. 296, 26 June 1593 (Isabetta Cuvli Londano).

these challenges, often made more onerous by the absence of parents, siblings, and kin. Recently arrived Greek women and men were even more disadvantaged because they had very few social networks to help them and many did not speak Italian. When Eugenia da Candia made her will in 1583 (she was about to give birth), her husband Zorzi, a sailor, was at sea. In Zorzi's absence her good friends Margarita and her husband Hieronymo, looked after Eugenia. They stood by her 'like a brother and sister'. If she did not survive the birth, Eugenia asked the couple to bury her and look after her baby until Zorzi returned from his voyage.⁹⁸ Friends were also called upon to be witnesses before a court or in support of petitions and other legal matters. Zorzi da Candia described how he risked life and limb to help fight the fire that engulfed the Ducal Palace in 1574. He lost some tools and clothing in the fire, and in 1577 he submitted a petition for compensation. He named several friends as witnesses who could attest to his bravery, personal sacrifice, and incidentally to the superior quality of his craftsmanship; Zorzi was also looking to secure a caulker's position in the Arsenal.⁹⁹

Friends provided companionship in good times and in bad. Manusso Agio-panditi recalled the two women who cared for him over the years: donna Thodora, who had looked after him in the past, and donna Lutetia, a member of his household cared for him at the present time.¹⁰⁰ Influential and powerful friends could help settle a personal dispute and legal, financial, and work problems. Elisabeta Serguna di Napoli di Romania asked another Naupliot, Franco Eugenico, a merchant of some importance, to help her secure an income bear-

⁹⁸ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 142, 25 August 1583: 'Et prego detto mio marito che l'habbi per recomanda Dona Margarita et suo marito Hieronymo [...] mi sono stati come fratello et sorella [...] et prego ditti mie comissari che facino manco spesa che si potrà nel seppelirmi et che non diano la robba a nissun finchè ditto mio marito retornerà dal viazo.'

⁹⁹ ASV, Collegio, risposte di dentro, filza 6, fol. 221, 4 January 1577: 'Io povero Zorzi de Candia calafao [...] da me mostrata in questo ultimo incendio del Palazzo dove alla presentia anco di Vostra Serenità insieme con gli altri della maestranza feci tal et tanta opera quanta habbi fatto ogni altro in quel bisogno passando gran pericolo della vita per il fuoco [...] Hora clementissima Reverendissima genuflexo la supplico che non tanto in ricompenso d'alcun mio merito ma per sua immensa benignità mi voglia far gratia ch'lo sia posto nel suo Arsenal per Calafa, a lavorar dell'arte mia.'

¹⁰⁰ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 478, Paolo de Grandis, no. 408, 30 July 1572: 'lasso a donna Thodora che era mia patrona vecchia per l'anima mia pel governo la me ha fatto ducati cinque [...] lasso à donna Lutetia patrona qui da casa [...] do ducati per l'anima mia, et pel governo che la mi ha fatto attendendomi in sanità, et ancho al presente.'

ing office; she was successful and kept the position till her death in October 1566.¹⁰¹ Martha Lascari Ralli's husband was a *capo dei stratioti*. After his death, Ralli sought out two community leaders, Nadal Mormori and his son Giacomo (who was also a *capo* and had known her husband), to help her secure a pension for herself and commissions for her sons.¹⁰² Friends filled the gaps left by the absence of family and kin and in this way became almost family.

The following account illustrates the fragility of many immigrants and the poor, people who were often on their own. It is the story of Galeazzo da Corfu, a man who belonged to no one. Galeazzo was an oarsman on the galleys. He died in 1540. He had been very ill and was being cared for by his landlord, a man named Franco Colona. The only other people present at his bedside before his death were a Greek priest from San Giorgio dei Greci and the notary who wrote his will. The priest confessed Galeazzo and asked him if he had any family, any brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, a wife, or children. Galeazzo replied that he had none. The priest then asked him if he owed money; Galeazzo did not. Did anyone owe him anything? Yes, Galeazzo said he had some money coming to him from the Camera dell' Armamento, and then added that as he was alone in the world he wanted to leave his few belongings to the Greek church. At the bottom of Galeazzo's brief will the notary noted that no one knew anything of the sailor, not even which ship he had served on.¹⁰³ According to the 1592 census there many, many people like Galeazzo, people living on their own with little or no family except for a small group of friends or acquaintances to look to for help and companionship. Creating new social networks was truly a challenging task.

* * *

In many ways the life of Francesco da Cipro encapsulates the immigrant story: settling, marriage and the arrival of children, new kin, and friendship networks. Francesco was a master craftsman, a caulker, who worked in the Arsenal. He and his first wife Stella da Corfu adopted a young orphan, Anna. After Stella's death in 1564 Francesco married Andriana Betti, and she helped him raise

¹⁰¹ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10642, Agostino Pellestrina, fol. 256r, 14 November 1547. Elisabeta received the income from Camera Fiscali till her death, when the position and its income was awarded to Zuane di Pierino Calligaro. See ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 2, fol. 103r, 12 December 1566.

¹⁰² ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10644, Agostino Pellestrina, fol. 344r, 11 July 1549.

¹⁰³ AAIEV, *Catasto* 9, fol. 179v.

Anna. Francesco inadvertently recorded his life in a series of five beautifully detailed wills.¹⁰⁴ These, together with Andriana's will, are among a handful of Greek working class testaments covering an extended period.¹⁰⁵ His first will was written in November 1576, at the height of the plague. He and Andriana were in quarantine in the Lazaretto Vecchio but before they went, Francesco left instructions for his notary, Gianpietro Anzelieri, to prepare his will in case the couple died; he was especially anxious to provide proper care for the young Anna. Fortunately, both Francesco and Andriana survived the plague.

Theirs was a small family, but with marriage and sponsorship they acquired in-laws and kin, and through work, the neighbourhood and social activities, Greek and Venetian friends. Most of Francesco's friends were colleagues from the Arsenal and his fellow brethren in the caulkers' guild. He had a brother, Andrea, who had died before the 1576 will. Andrea was survived by his widow, Marieta da Cipro, and their children, Franceschina and Antonio. Francesco designated them his heirs in 1576. Other kin included madonna Drosso, his sponsor (*comare*), and Nicolò and Pasquetta Gonaldo, whose child he had baptized. He had numerous work and commercial associates, and, like all good Venetians, Francesco did a little bit of money-lending and borrowing on the side. His friendship circle from the Arsenal eventually expanded to include Anna's husband Domenego and his family. In 1581 Francesco drew up a new will because Anna now had her own child, Giulia, and Francesco wanted to ensure her inheritance. The third will, 9 May 1585, announced Anna's death and provided a dowry for Giulia and financial support for Domenego and his mother, who together with Francesco and Andriana assumed joint responsibility for raising young Giulia. The household now included Andriana, Francesco, Giulia, her father and paternal grandmother, and a young woman named Marietina, the daughter of Vittoria, a close family friend. Nineteen days after this third will Francesco visited Gianpietro Anzelieri again. Marieta da Cipro, his sister-in-law, had died and once again the family's circumstances had changed. Marieta's children inherited her estate and no longer needed their uncle's support. Francesco's new will reflected this change.

Two years later, on 17 March 1587 Adrianna Betti made her will (she died two days later). She appointed Francesco her heir, left a number of small bequests

¹⁰⁴ The five wills were done by the one notary: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 171, 10 November 1576; 6 August 1581; 9 May 1585; 28 May 1585 and no. 176, 10 February 1588.

¹⁰⁵ Andriana's will is in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 2, 17 March 1587.

to close friends and to her niece and nephew (the late Marieta's children), and set aside her few items of jewellery and furnishings for Giulia. Andriana adored her adopted granddaughter — she called her 'my golden child' (*mia fia d'oro*), a term that implied a deep love.¹⁰⁶ Finally, in 1588 Francesco da Cipro wrote what was possibly his last will. Debts had to be collected and Giulia's inheritance arranged. Given the fragility of life, Francesco had to cover all contingencies, and in this will he tried his best to do so. Giulia was Francesco's heir regardless of whether she married or entered a convent. If she were to die before she had children of her own, then the estate was to be divided into three: one-third to his late brother's children, one-third to the Greek church, and one-third as a dowry for a poor, orphaned girl from a good background (*da ben*). He left Giulia what little cash he had and the great bed which originally belonged to his first wife Stella, and then to Andriana and Francesco. But, he added, only after his death since he would need it in the meantime. Giulia was also to get two rugs, a silver cup, three silver forks, a gold ring and the income from two concessions awarded to Francesco by the state.¹⁰⁷ To ensure that his wishes were carried out, Francesco turned to the Greek archbishop and to his closest friends, the men he had worked with in the Arsenal. He entrusted them to carry out the provisions of his final will and to protect Giulia and her inheritance. He had lost many loved family members, kin, and friends, but he had also acquired many more, and through Giulia and his niece and nephew, the family line would continue.

In an immigrant community the acquisition of family, kin, and friends signified the family's survival, its intention to stay, to create a permanent home and community that blended long-held traditions and customs into local ones. The manner of their working lives further bound Greeks to Venice, and in this way added another layer that defined who they were.

¹⁰⁶ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 2, 17 March 1587. Andrianna Betti's death notice is in ACPV, registri dei morti, reg. 1, San Pietro di Castello, fol. 55v.

¹⁰⁷ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 176, 10 February 1588.

THE WORLD OF WORK

In the sixteenth century, Venice still commanded much of the trade in the eastern Mediterranean.¹ At the same time, the Venetian economy went through a series of economic and financial fluctuations. Some markets shrank, especially after the loss of the city's two biggest customers, France and England, in the mid-1500s. Despite heavy losses to the Ottomans, the Republic moved quickly to re-establish relations with the new rulers of its former possessions and resume commercial contacts. Furthermore, the Ottoman attacks on its sea territories had some positive economic side-effects. Prosperity increased as maritime workers, artisans, shopkeepers, and well-connected mercantile families from the former colonies settled in Venice. Shipbuilding was accelerated to meet the naval and financial pressures of a powerful antagonist. More importantly, very few elites withdrew from maritime trade.² Had the economy been

¹ Frederic Lane and Domenico Sella stress the resilience of the Venice's economy that enabled the state to overcome potential threats arising from Portuguese discoveries and Ottoman incursions into Venetian territories. Lane maintains that Venetian international commerce expanded in the sixteenth century and cites the growth in shipbuilding from 1502–1507, the years of Portuguese discoveries, as evidence. Sella cites the rise in anchorage taxes and customs receipts in the latter part of the sixteenth century as further proof of a healthy economy. Venetian dominance of the trade in exotic and luxury goods was maintained, while other cargo such as cotton, olive oil, raisins, raw sugar, wax, and hides were imported to Venice from Turkey, Cyprus, Crete, southern Italy, the Ionian Islands, Egypt, and the Balkans before being exported to Northern Europe and Germany. Greek merchants traded in all the latter commodities. Lane, 'Venetian Shipping during the Commercial Revolution', pp. 22–46; Sella, 'Crisis and Transformation in Venetian Trade', pp. 89–90.

² James Davies's study of the Donà family recounts their evolution from commoner merchants to patrician landowners: Davies, *A Venetian Family and its Fortune*, pp. 21–46.

weak, Venice would have been unable to absorb high numbers of immigrants or attract skilled workers and merchants, who would have gone elsewhere.

One of the myths about Venetian Greeks was that they were solid working, middle-class, and upper middle-class men and women who achieved comfortable levels of prosperity through determination and hard work: the quintessential modern immigrant success story. This was not the case. A look through the 1592–94 census and the death registers of Castello's parishes shows that Greeks, although represented in many professions, 'were essentially a poor people and with little education'.³ Not all merchants were wealthy or even comfortable: most sailors did not have the specialist skills that enabled them to earn a higher wage, and very few Arsenal masters had the experience and training to become *proti* ('The First') among artisans. Greeks were shopkeepers, sailors, merchants, tradesmen, teachers, and servants. The majority were engaged in commerce and the sea, two complementary occupations. A handful entered the upper levels of public administration as interpreters, chancery secretaries, and diplomats, or became doctors and lawyers. A number found work in Greek and non-Greek owned printing and publishing houses, especially those printing the classics and Greek liturgical works. However, publishing was a specialist occupation that never employed large numbers of people. With few exceptions then, Greeks did the same work as other immigrants and most Venetians.

The focus of this chapter is on the types of work Greeks did, the variety of work they undertook, the networks they developed, and their contribution to the Venetian economy.

Artisans, Mariners, and Merchants

Reflecting the custom of the day, people engaged in many different kinds of work.⁴ Besides buying and selling goods, merchants loaned money and invested in land and new technologies like printing presses. Mariners sailed ships, but they were also fighters who protected vessels and their contents from pirates and other enemies. At ports of call many sailors set up stalls to barter and

Patrician moves away from maritime commerce, especially Mediterranean trade, began in the late 1500s and accelerated in the mid-1600s. The economic effects of this were not felt in Venice until after the loss of Crete in 1669.

³ 'gente povera e di poca istruzione': Ploumidis, 'Considerazioni sulla popolazione greca a Venezia,' p. 224.

⁴ Information in the tables throughout this chapter was collected from wills, petitions, Senate decisions, the census of 1592–1594, and the membership registers of the Greek *scuola*.

Table 3.1: Greek Occupations 1498–1600

Category	Number of people (percentage)
Artisans	341 (26%)
Maritime workers	312 (23%)
Merchants	275 (20%)
Servants and apprentices	173 (13%)
Professionals	129 (10%)
Military (men and officers)	100 (8%)
TOTAL	1330 (100%)

to trade while others acted as agents for merchants who no longer travelled with their goods. Women worked as servants, seamstresses, wet nurses, brokers, moneylenders, merchants, and rentiers. Printers, publishers, teachers, and scholars also worked as agents for wealthy clients interested in acquiring rare manuscripts, books, and artwork. In other words, most people engaged in a variety of economic activities, which makes categorizing them rather difficult. For this reason, occupation here is defined as work people did for the major part of the year and from which they derived most of their income.

The following account illustrates how difficult it is to identify women and men by a single occupation in the early modern period. Between 1563–98, Zorzi Zachona and his son Stamati submitted eight work-related petitions to the College, and seven of these were granted. This was an extraordinary success rate as most petitions did not survive beyond the first reading.⁵ The family’s employment history and its relationship to the Republic was described several times in the petitions. In his first submission (1563), Zorzi Zachona used one of the most popular models of petition writing: he recalled the many instances of the family’s loyalty to, and its defence of, Venetian ideals. The Zachona had always served Venice well. Zorzi, his four brothers, father, and several uncles were mariners on the galleys and had fought in many naval battles. In that first petition, Zorzi asked for a position as a clerk or bookkeeper (*scrivan*) with a company of *turcopoli* in Cyprus.⁶ He supported his claim with accounts of

⁵ Zorzi Zachona submitted three petitions between 1563 and 1571. Stamati submitted five from 1583 to 1598. The success rate of working and lower middle-class petitions was not very high. On worker petitions, see Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal*, pp. 183–97.

⁶ *Turcopoli* were locally raised Cypriot militias.

the hardships the family faced because of their devotion to the *Serenissima*: in 1540 one of his brothers was killed during the naval battle of Monemvasia, the family's *patria*, and Zorzi claimed he lost a thousand ducats worth of property when that city fell to the Ottomans. His petition was rejected. Having got no satisfaction from this first attempt, Zorzi tried again in 1566 when he put in a request for a stipend from the Camera da Corfu (five ducats a month) in his name, and after his death in the name of one of his sons. This request was granted, and in 1571, in response to his third petition, the Senate awarded him the captaincy of a *fusta*, a type of small ship.⁷ Earlier, probably in the early 1540s when he came to Venice, Zorzi had been awarded a house in Zara which he had to repair and maintain; in return, he was allowed to keep a large portion of the rent.

Stamati also started out as a mariner but stopped sailing in the mid-1570s to become an apprentice to a master minter. In 1574 Zorzi died, and Stamati inherited the Zara house along with its burdens and income, and the Corfu stipend. In 1583, having finished his apprenticeship, he petitioned for and was granted a licence to open a workshop to mint coins for the Zecca, the Venetian mint. This first petition was followed by another four. Having secured the licence to mint coins, Stamati waited seven years before submitting a second petition. This time, he wanted a position in the office where gold was weighed (*Pesador dall' Oro*) when one became vacant, a request that was a natural extension of his minting work. His third petition (1593) was also the most informative about the Zachona. Stamati described in detail not only the exploits of the Zachona men but also the men on his mother's side of the family. Nicolò, his maternal grandfather, also fought in the defence of Monemvasia. He evacuated his own family to Crete before the final battle (1541) and then returned to fight alongside his countrymen and died (impaled by the Turks), leaving a widow and many children.⁸ On the Zachona side, Stamati repeated the accounts of the lives of his father, grandfather, uncles, and great-uncles.

In the 1593 petition Stamati asked that the five-ducat stipend from the Camera da Corfu that had been his since Zorzi's death be passed on to one of

⁷ A *fusta* was a type of small ship. Zorzi Zachona's petitions are in ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di fuori, filza 317, fol. 40r, 30 August 1563; ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 2, fol. 105r–v, 12 December 1566; and ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 40, fols 98v–99r, 2 November 1571.

⁸ The Ottomans impaled men they deemed traitors. If Grandfather Nicolò had taken an oath to the sultan and then turned against him, that would have constituted grounds for impalement. However, most impalements were reserved for prominent men, and the Zachona were not in that league. Stamati was embellishing the family story somewhat.

his children, male or female, after his death. He also wanted the same arrangement with the income from the Zara house. Three years later, in 1596, he asked for a broker's licence, and in 1598 for a renewal of the deed to the Zara property: both requests were granted.⁹ Stamati Zachona enjoyed a variety of occupations during his long life: mariner and soldier, artisan, broker, rent collector, and owner of income bearing offices. By the time of his final petition (1598), he was drawing an income from five sources. Two of these were the outcome of his own artisan training. The monies he collected from these awards and the Zara house were part of his inheritance and would eventually go to his children. The broker's licence was his entry into another lucrative occupation. What was Stamati Zachona? Artisan, mariner, merchant, landlord, broker, or investor? Like so many others in this period, he was all of the above.

Artisans

Artisans were subject to Venetian labour laws, so foreign and subject tradesmen had to be guild members. Greek artisans were familiar with these rules since the same conditions applied in their homelands. Guilds organized the production of goods, regulated the markets, looked after members and their families, and participated in the city's cultural, social, and religious life. Masters were expected to play an active part in guild affairs through office holding, overseeing the activities of the guild's *scuola* (the guild's philanthropic and social arm), and organizing guild participation in civic and religious ceremonies. Given Venice's reliance on outsiders to make up significant parts of its workforce, it is not surprising that many tradesmen were non-Venetians. Indeed, Richard Mackenney found that in the early 1400s a large number of journeymen were immigrants.¹⁰

⁹ Stamati Zachona's petitions are in ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 7, fol. 187r, 20 May 1583; ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 9, fol. 245r, 29 January 1590; ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di fuori, filza 346, 7 August 1593 (unfoliated); ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 10, fol. 99r, 10 November 1596; and ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 10, fol. 218r, 1 June 1598.

¹⁰ 'One group likely to have been prominent among journeymen was that composed of immigrants. The early statutes suggest that they were absorbed with relative ease, perhaps indicating that the status groups did not become too rigid — vital to a city which depended on the influx of outsiders both for expansion and recovery. Like native Venetians, foreign workers were obliged to enter the scuola in order to practise the trade — usually within a week of arriving in the city. Those qualified as masters had [...] to serve a probationary year before being recognised as a full master in Venice': Mackenney, *Tradesmen and Traders*, p. 23. Also,

Table 3.2: The Artisan Professions

Occupation	Numbers
Tailors (<i>sartori</i>)	81
Swordmakers (<i>spaderi</i>)	50
Shipwrights (<i>marangoni</i>)	44
Caulkers (<i>calafati</i>)	36
Makers of gold thread (<i>tiraori</i>)	35
Painters (<i>depentori/pittori</i>)	31
Barbers (<i>barbieri</i>)	14
Cimadori ¹¹	12
Others ¹²	38
TOTAL	341

Artisans were the largest Greek occupational group, and tailoring was the most popular trade. Greek tailors did not work exclusively for Greeks but competed for work among the general public. In the middle of the sixteenth century, Nicolò Draco had a shop in the Piazza di San Marco, while Nicolò Cocoli and his partner, maestro Zorzi, worked out of a shop on the quayside of the parish of San Giovanni in Bragora, near the Arsenal.¹³ As with all things, location was important. Draco, and later his son Demetri, benefitted from being in Piazza di San Marco, one of the busiest commercial areas of the city, while Cocoli and maestro Zorzi were strategically placed to take advantage of the needs of hundreds of men and women working in the Arsenal. In the early years of the century the profession was well represented in the confraternity.¹⁴ Greek tailors

see Manno, *I maestri di Venezia*. For the role of guilds in civic life, see Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice*, 1981.

¹¹ *Cimadori* raised the nap of the finished cloth (usually wool).

¹² Tradesmen in the 'Others' category include: eight shoemakers; four each of gold leaf makers, rosary bead makers, and ironsmiths; three each of weavers and spinners; two each of furriers, minters, goldsmiths, and stonemasons; and one each of sawyers, combers, bakers, and knife sharpeners.

¹³ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10645, Agostino Pellestrina, fols 79r–80r, 11 February 1550 (Nicolò Draco); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 64, 27 June 1580 (Cocoli and maestro Zorzi).

¹⁴ In Venice a *scuola* was a confraternity, but because it also referred to a guild's charity, it was widely used to mean 'guild' as well.

were called in to assess the quality of the fabrics the *scuola* bought to decorate the inside of the church, and they also had a monopoly in the production of clerical vestments.¹⁵ Sword-makers, the second largest artisan group, supplied both the domestic and foreign market. As Venice was frequently at war during the century, sword-makers were never short of work. Table 3.2 has a breakdown of the work of Greek artisans.

Most Greek artisans found employment in the maritime industry. The majority were shipwrights, caulkers, and barbers. All Greek barbers in Table 3.2 worked onboard ships, where they provided first aid, performed minor surgery, and cut hair. Similarly, all Greek caulkers (*calafati*) and shipwrights (*marangoni*) were employed in the Arsenal, the state shipbuilding complex. Greeks had a good reputation as shipbuilders going back to the late fourteenth century, when the Baxon-Palopano shipbuilding family of Rhodes was recruited to work in Venice. Baxon rose to become a leading craftsman of shipwrights (*proto dei marangoni*), and eventually his nephew and greatnephews followed in his footsteps. The family's status caused much resentment among local *proti* who felt only Venetians should be leading craftsmen.¹⁶ By the sixteenth century, however, there were several Greek *proti* working in the Arsenal, indicating that attitudes had changed.¹⁷ In 1527 the Senate awarded the shipwright Francesco de Thodaro da Corfu his request for a pay increase to bring his wages into line with those of other *proti*: 'il stipendio che e solito esser dato ad altri protti' (the stipend that is usually given to other *proti*).¹⁸ In 1550, Andrea da Modon was the *proto* of the caulkers, and in the 1580s Zuane de Manusso was *proto* of the wadding (*proto della stoppa*).¹⁹

The importance of shipbuilding and the maintenance of a strong fleet were central to Venetian power, and the state did all it could to promote the maritime crafts. The 1500s were boom years for the industry, and the Arsenal attracted its highest number of workers. Greek employment was consistent throughout this period, and the second half of the century recorded more Greek men working there than at previous times. The state encouraged caulkers and ship-

¹⁵ Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, p. 76.

¹⁶ Lane, *Venetian Ships and Shipbuilding*, p. 56.

¹⁷ Some *proti* had a higher status than others. For example, a *proto dei marangoni* or a *proto dei calafati* was higher than the *proto della stoppa* (wadding).

¹⁸ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 21, fol. 73v, 30 January 1527.

¹⁹ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10645, Agostino Pellestrina, fol. 75r, February 1550 (Andrea da Modon). Zuane de Manusso appears in all the wills of the caulker Francesco da Cipro.

wrights to work in the Arsenal (instead of private shipyards) for a number of months of the year and expressed this requirement in terms of duty and public obligation. In return, it awarded *arsenalotti* many privileges, such as employment security for themselves and their sons, access to work in private shipyards, tax advantages, and the honour of acting as the doge's personal bodyguards.²⁰ Greek *arsenalotti* had the same duties and responsibilities and enjoyed the same rights and benefits as other members of this select group.²¹ Some displayed more initiative than others. In 1568 the shipwright Piero Sardela described a mechanism he had devised that he claimed would speed up construction and result in better-built keels. He demonstrated this to Arsenal officials, 'visto li Clarissimi personi è patroni all'Arsenal, insieme con li periti' (seen by the most enlightened persons and heads of the Arsenal along with other experts) who, he claimed, were very impressed.²² Not everyone showed such enthusiasm, however. Working conditions were difficult, the hours were long, there were always conflicts over pay, and the men complained bitterly about unpaid wages. *Arsenalotti* were expected to take on extra duties, such as turns at going to sea. *Calafati* and *marangoni* always went out with the fleets because ships constantly needed repair at sea.

There were no exclusively Greek trades, with one small exception, the *madonneri*. They were artists who painted icons in the Byzantine style.²³ A close knit group, the *madonneri* had brought their artistic traditions with them when they emigrated to Venice. A few worked in other art forms, but the main source of income for the majority was the production of inexpensive icons found in all Venetian homes. Because most *madonneri* were not great artists, there is a general tendency to dismiss their work as inferior to the artwork produced by more well-known painters.²⁴ However, they filled an important need,

²⁰ Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal*, p. 13.

²¹ The term *arsenalotti* applied only to the masters of the Arsenal's three major guilds: shipbuilders, caulkers, and oarmakers. These artisans constituted about 75 per cent of the workforce. On their status and privileges, see Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal*, pp. 10–16.

²² ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 3, fol. 14r, 4 April 1568.

²³ On the *madonneri*, see Bettini, *La pittura dei icone Cretese-Veneziana e i Madonneri*; Chatzidakis, 'La Peinture des Madonneri ou Veneto-crétois'; Chatzidakis and Drakopoulou, *Greek Painters after the Conquest of Constantinople*; Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, *From Byzantium to El Greco*; Eliades, *Cultural Interactions in Cyprus*, pp. 15–31; Gouma-Peterson, 'Crete, Venice, the "Madonneri" and a Creto-Venetian Icon'.

²⁴ 'Probably the quality of many such commissioned icons was fairly low, and the dismissive term *madonneri* was devised to describe such bulk painters': Constantoudaki-Kitromilides, *From Byzantium to El Greco*, p. 51.

and their pictures sold well. They were not many in number, nor did they constitute a separate guild, since all *madonneri* had to be members of the painters' guild.²⁵ In fact, they had something resembling a closed shop within the guild since very few non-Cretans became a *madonneri*.

The *madonneri* were not the only Greek artists in Venice; there were many others, including the young Domenikos Theotokopoulos (El Greco) who worked in Venice for a brief period (c. 1567–70) before moving to Spain. Artists came to Venice in search of work and a broader and wealthier clientele. The majority were from Crete and the Ionian Islands. As construction of the church of San Giorgio dei Greci neared completion, the board overseeing the project held competitions to attract artists to decorate the interior and exterior of the new church. It awarded commissions to both Greek and Venetians.²⁶ One of these was Thomio Battà, a painter from Corfu.²⁷ Battà had been in Venice from at least 1580; one of the earliest references to him was in 1581 when he joined the Greek *scuola*.²⁸ He was a painter, restorer, and a mosaicist. He had an apprentice, Manoli Zuanfurnari, who would go on to become an important artist himself. Tomio and Marulla Battà had no children, and after Battà's death Zuanfurnari inherited all of the maestro's materials; among these were marble slabs, designs and sketches in Greek and Italian styles, and many bolts of silk.²⁹ Battà had Greek and Venetian commissions and worked for pub-

²⁵ The painters' guild was organized into several branches representing the variety of interests of its members: artistic work, miniatures, decoration, house painters, to name a few. Mackenney, *Tradesmen and Traders*, p. 4; Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, pp. 79–80.

²⁶ The Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci's board (*banca*) had the responsibility of managing and overseeing the building project for the new church. Chapter 4 is devoted to establishment and functions of the Greek *scuola* and church.

²⁷ There were other Battà (or Bathà) in Venice, all artists, but the relationship between them and Thomio is unclear. Marco Battà and Zorzi Battà both described themselves as 'deponentor in la scuola' when they joined the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci. Marco's and Zorzi's enrolments appear in Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, pp. 253 and 274 and also AAIEV, *Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci*, reg. 134, fol. 121r. Zorzi Battà first joined the *scuola* in 1561 and again in 1563; Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, p. 324 and AAIEV, *Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci*, reg. 134, fol. 235v.

²⁸ AAIEV, *Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci*, reg. 134, fol. 206r. Thomio Battà's membership fees covered the years 1581–1598. He died on 13 April 1599. The death notice is in *Gli Atti di Morte dei Greci*, ed. by Maltezou and Ploumides, p. 39. The death notice described Battà as a 'Greco dalle Madonne'.

²⁹ In 1592 Manoli Zuanfurnari was Battà's apprentice and lived in his house in Sant' Antonin

lic and private patrons. In 1594 he was praised for his restoration of the icon of the Madonna of the Graces in St Mark's church. Four years later, he won the competition to do the mosaics of the Christ Pantocrator in the conch of the apse at San Giorgio dei Greci, bettering several well-known artists, including Palma il Giovane.³⁰

No artisan trade was based on ethnicity. Parents did not send their sons exclusively to Greek masters for their training. Instead, they sought out masters with good reputations and talent. Zorzi Nufri apprenticed his son Demetri to a Venetian, Hieronymo Spuoza, while Zuane Castanio's son Zorzi learned his craft from the shipwright Manolachi Papadopoulos.³¹ In some cases, however, choice was limited; if a young man wanted to become a *madonnero*, his most likely masters were Cretans or other Greeks. In the sixteenth century, at least, no Venetian practised this trade.³²

The Maritime Occupations

Seafarers were the second largest occupational group. The figures in Table 3.3 confirm the low status of the majority of Greek seafarers; over half (55 per cent) the profession worked as oarsmen (*galeotti*) and deckhands (*marinari*).

Seafarers with special skills and duties always identified themselves by the tasks they performed. For example, *timonieri*, *pedote*, and *nocchieri* were essentially pilots, but the work they did differed: *timonieri* sailed the ship, *pedote* maneuvered it in and out of the harbour, and *nocchieri* were coxswains. *Galeotti* were oarsmen who worked on the galleys. The highest positions on state vessels were reserved for patricians, but Greeks could, and did, join non-noble officer ranks. Zuane di Malvassia (Monemvasia) and Zuane da Cania were *comiti* on state galleys. *Comiti* had general responsibility for the crew.

parish: ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 1, Sant'Antonin, unfoliated. Battà's gifts to Zuanfurnari are in his will: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 344, Nicolò Doglioni, no. 588, 11 April 1599.

³⁰ The competition and Battà's and Palma's contributions are discussed in Chapter 5, p. 174.

³¹ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10643, Agostino Pellestrina, fol. 59r–v, 20 February 1548 (Nufri) and b. 10640, fol. 31r, 9 February 1545 (Castanio).

³² In Santa Maria Formosa parish, a young boy, Dominico, was an apprentice to the *madonnero* Thomaso, and two other boys, Andrea and Zuanantonio, to the *madonnero* Alvise Lubina: ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 4, unfoliated. In Sant' Antonin parish Andrea was apprenticed to master shoemaker Dionisi, Mano Zuanfurnari to the artist Thomio Battà, Nicolò to Andrea the tailor, and Anzolo to the household of the Greek archbishop: ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 1, Sant'Antonin, unfoliated.

Table 3.3: The Maritime Professions

Categories	Numbers
Sailors (<i>marinari</i>)	123
Captains (<i>patroni</i>)	70
Pilots (<i>timonieri, pedote, nocchieri</i>)	47
Oarsmen (<i>galeotti</i>)	28
Officers (<i>amiragli, comiti, scribani</i>)	22
Other mariners ³³	22
TOTAL	312

Generally the profession, particularly among the lower ranks, was beset with problems. The most serious of these was irregular employment, low wages and delays in the payment of these, recruitment difficulties, and the dangers all shipping faced on the high seas. As well, by the early sixteenth century merchandise was transported by round ships rather than merchant galleys. This seriously impacted on jobs because round ships required fewer crew. Merchant ships had their own regular crews, and besides, they sailed to fewer ports because competition from Spain, Portugal, and the northern countries made some westward and northern routes unprofitable. Venice was at war off and on from 1499 to 1540 and again between 1570 and 1573, periods that saw a spike in the construction of warships. These needed large crews but only in wartime.³⁴ To man the war fleets the state conscripted crews from Venetian territories along the Dalmatian, Albanian, and Greek coasts. They cost less to hire than locals, a factor in the decision to recruit them in large numbers. After the war, many of these men remained in the city, and once they secured work they moved their families there. However, even at the best of times employment remained seasonal, and employers were slow to pay crews. The sight of sailors protesting outside the ducal palace for unpaid earnings was common.³⁵

³³ This category includes nine bombadiers, five sailors responsible for casting off (*buterini*), four barge rowers (*barcharuoli*), three *ducatari* (sailors who worked the ropes), and one *nollizato* (who oversaw the embarkation and disembarkation of passengers and cargo).

³⁴ Lane estimates that a war fleet of fifty ships employed up to ten thousand seamen, while forty round ships employed around 3200: Lane, ‘Wages and Recruitment of Venetian Galeotti’, pp. 16–18.

³⁵ Lane, ‘Wages and Recruitment of Venetian Galeotti’, pp. 18 and 23.

Seafaring was hard and dangerous work, and many lost their lives. Piracy was a serious problem, and shipwrecks were common. The San Martin parish census, where so many mariners lived, reinforces the perils of the occupation.³⁶ All hands were expected to defend their vessel, its cargo, and themselves. If their ship was captured, the crew might be set free after the enemy or the pirates (often one and the same) helped themselves to its cargo. More often, however, officers and men spent years imprisoned or enslaved while their families, if they had the means, raised money to ransom them. The death or enslavement of a major breadwinner had horrible repercussions on seafaring families. At such times, maritime wives and widows turned to the state for support. They sought work for themselves or one or more of their children. Not surprisingly, they asked that sons be considered for a place on the fleets when one became available. Like other occupations, sons followed fathers into the profession and, with few exceptions, remained there all their lives. Nicolò di Zorzi d' Assira was a mariner like his father and grandfather; Zuane Cosmà sailed, as did his father Manoli, his son Zorzi, and his grandson Zanetto; between them, Piero Caravella and his father Dimo spent nearly fifty years working on galleys.

In the non-sailing season sailors sought other work to supplement their wages. During the months the fleets were in the Lagoon, they looked for labouring jobs in the Arsenal or private shipyards and on barges and other sea-craft. Some did odd jobs or engaged in commerce. Costantino Papagianni da Cipro was a sailor on the galleys, but in the off season he worked as a moneylender, mainly among mariners. In April 1580 alone, Papagianni loaned money to fifteen men, and all but five of them were sailors.³⁷ Even when the fleets were preparing to sail, mariners found ways to augment their wages. One common arrangement involved one person, usually the merchant or his *factotum*, commissioning one or more sailors to deliver the merchant's goods to their destination. Another had the merchant and the sailor signing an agreement by which the sailor delivered the goods or sold or bartered them for a good price; upon the ship's return to Venice, the sailor gave the merchant the principal and the profits of the venture. In return, the merchant gave the sailor a percentage of the profits.

As with other occupations, mariners enjoyed certain privileges. It was considered a mark of high respect for grieving families to ask members of the mariners guild and *scuola* (*scuola e fraterna dei marinari*) to accompany the coffin

³⁶ Shipwrecks outnumbered pirate attacks and seizures; for example, Tenenti counts 155 shipwrecks and 108 pirate attacks and ship seizures for the period 1592–99: Tenenti, *Naufrages, corsaires et assurances maritimes*, pp. 69–156.

³⁷ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 92, 16 April 1580.

of their loved one during the funeral and burial. In return, the deceased's family made a donation to the mariner's *scuola* that then invested the money in a fund that supported maritime widows and orphans. Public and private charities offered help to sailors who could no longer go to sea. The state reserved a number of licences for sailors to become pepper brokers (*poveri al pevere*). This allowed a retired (for lack of a better word) sailor to earn an income to support himself in his old age. Menego da Corfu applied for one in February 1590. He had served on the galleys for decades, he said, but he could no longer go to sea, yet he needed an income to sustain himself and his family. A few days after Menego's petition, another sailor, Zuane di Famagusta, made a similar request because, he said, all sailors had the right to ask for this licence.³⁸ Mariners and their families got free housing in the Case della Marinarezza on the Riva degli Schiavoni, and sick mariners received care at the Ospedale di Gesù Cristo di Sant' Antonio. The support of these institutions and the few monetary privileges allowed mariners a small measure of comfort when they were no longer able to perform their duties.

Officers serving on state galleys had greater opportunities for advancement than those who sailed on privately owned ships. Zorzi Petropoulo da Candia was the chief navigator (*armirai* or *amiraglio*) of a galley. This was the highest position non-nobles could aspire to, something akin to chief of staff to the captain. *Amirai* (or *amiragli*) were the most skilled seamen in all of Venice, responsible for everything connected with navigating and fighting. At sea the *amirai* had his own table, separate from the captain's: at his table sat the *comito* (the officer commanding aft), the *paron iurato* (officer commanding before the mast), the ship's scribe, the *penese* (an older man in charge of the gear), the ship's carpenter and caulker, the chief gunner (*bombardiero*), and eight to twelve mates (*nocchieri* or *compagni*). All *amirai* were chosen by ballot.³⁹

³⁸ 'ricompensa de cosi lunga et fidel mia servitù conciedermi una aspettativa di poveri al pevere prima vacante' (as compensation for my loyal service concede to me the first expectancy to be vacated in the *poveri al pevere*): ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 9, no. 256, 13 February 1590. Eight days later Zuane da Famagusta submitted his request: 'conciedermi il beneficio del pevere com' ella è solita concieder à tutti I marinari' (concede to me a benefice from the *pevere* as it is the custom to concede (this) to all sailors): ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 9, no. 260, 21 February 1590.

³⁹ For the duties of officers on state galleys, see Lane, *Venice: A Maritime Republic*, p. 343. Zorzi Petropoulo's will is in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 43, Avidio Branco, no. 157, 26 February 1532. His appointment as captain on the galley *Iustiniana* is in ASV, *Collegio Notatorio*, reg. 18, fol. 61r, 11 May 1517.

Captains commanding their own or an employer's ship had a great number of responsibilities. They had to ensure that cargo entrusted to their care arrived safely at its destination and was delivered to the merchants' clients or factors. They had to keep all documents and money securely locked away in safes in their quarters and guard these from pirates, thieves, and occasionally their own crews. A theft in 1559 involved two Greek crewmen who stole 1440 ducats from the captain's safe. The thieves were caught, and when the ship returned to Venice, two respected members of the Greek community, Giacomo Samariari and Emmanuel Cantacuzene, were called in to negotiate a settlement that punished the culprits and secured the repayment of the stolen cash.⁴⁰ It was to avoid such unfortunate incidents that merchants sought out dependable sailors and captains, men they could trust with their goods. It was not surprising then that merchants came to rely on men who had proven themselves, who they could depend on to do the right thing. All parties benefitted when there was mutual trust. Nevertheless, maritime work was difficult and rewards hard to come by. Galeazzo da Corfu's story, recounted earlier, was not unique.

With some extra jobs mariners were able to make life more comfortable, acquiring one or two items of value and putting money aside for themselves and their heirs. Like other working class professions, seafarers ranged from the poor to the fairly comfortable. But never rich. In 1523 the sailor and sometime merchant, Zuane Coliva da Candia, drew up his will and designated his illegitimate son Zorzi his heir. Zorzi received clothing, shoes, a gold ring, and eight ducats from his father. A Greek priest got two ducats, and Zorzi's mother, Fiorentia, and the Cretan nobleman Pietro Coressi were named executors of Coliva's estate. Another sailor, Zuane Cosmà, owned property in his native Bracchio di Maina from which he drew a small income; he left this to his grandson Zanetto following the death of the boy's father. Cosmà and Coliva were fortunate because they both had a second income. Not so Michali Pelecan, whose story is more typical of life at sea. In 1540 he was a young sailor on a ship carrying food and reinforcements to the besieged city of Napoli di Romania. His father and brother were with him, and, by the sound of it, this was Michali's first voyage. The ship was attacked near the city by four *fuste*, but Michali did not say whether the attack came from Ottomans or pirates. His father and brother died defending the ship. Michali and the other survivors were enslaved and taken to Alexandria, where Michali endured 'blows, hunger and other punishments'. Eventually a Christian merchant paid Pelecan's ransom, and he made his way

⁴⁰ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 6487, Paolo de Grandis, fols 638r–639r, 10 October 1559.

to Venice where he hoped to find a good position in the city or one of its land territories. He did not seem keen to return to the sea.⁴¹

Nearly all seafarers remained in the occupation their entire lives. The maritime profession remained popular among working class Greeks during the whole of the century, and maritime workers, from sailors to captains, worked closely with merchants. The one profession relied on the other: merchants needed seafarers to deliver and return merchandise, and seafarers needed the work and the extra income these arrangements offered.

Merchants and their Networks

Greeks were shopkeepers, moneylenders, brokers, and traders, and for the majority, these commercial activities yielded average incomes. Only the wealthiest Greeks were engaged in international trade, and even then the scope of their undertakings was restricted by laws favouring patricians and *cittadini originarii*. Venetian elites had a monopoly on the most profitable commodities, such as perfumes, spices, precious jewels, expensive fabrics, and other luxury items. Most Greeks traded in wheat and cereals, cotton, wine, olives, salt, oil, and other staples where profits were steady but not dramatic. Their commercial world was initially limited to the ports in the eastern Mediterranean, to places, people, and products they were already familiar with before moving to Venice. But for Greek elites, immigration opened the door to the broader world of Venetian markets.

The state carefully supervised trade, especially in essential products. Venice was a city with no hinterland, so the supply of grains and cereals was vitally important. The loss of territories like Cyprus meant merchants had to find new sources for these products; not surprisingly, the state encouraged greater cultivation of grains in *Terraferma* territories. Consequently, the grain trade was strictly controlled. The Grain Office oversaw supply, issued licences, and assured merchants a good profit; since importers did not have to sell to the state, they could trade on the open market if they chose. Many Greek merchants applied for and secured grain licences. Between March 1528 and January 1529, the partners Piero da Modon and Mazo Hebreo (the Hebrew) secured a licence

⁴¹ Zuane Coliva's will is in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 271, B. Cavagnis, no. 316, 22 April 1523. Zuane Cosmà's two wills are in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 314, D. Ferrandi, no. 70, 20 August 1578 and ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 225, 5 September 1584. Michali Pelecan's story is in ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 1, fol. 80r, 29 October 1564.

to trade 1500 *stara* of grain. In the same period Marco Samariari received five licences, Jacopo Seguro and Nicolò Negron two each, while the Vergi and Barelli and individuals like Andrea Curcumeli and Pietro Condolignoti won lifetime concessions.⁴² Salt was also an essential commodity.⁴³ Chioggia was the main source, but its output was supplemented by imports from Cyprus and the Balearic Islands. Like the grain trade, the state closely regulated salt production and sales. Producers were required to place their product at the disposal of the Salt Office, the *Camera del Sal* which issued licences to exporters with instructions on where, how much, and at what price they could buy and sell the product. Salt and grain licences guaranteed steady incomes, and it was common to find immigrants asking for and receiving one or more of these.

State oversight of commerce extended to the formation of partnerships and companies. Venetian law forbade foreigners from entering into commercial partnerships with Venetians, but Greeks were subject people, not foreigners, and this distinction allowed them to forge links with Venetians. Most Greeks, however, preferred to work with family members and compatriots, and then with Venetians and others. Many mercantile careers reflected the importance of family in one's career. Zuane Nassin regularly invested money in his brothers' many business ventures, trusting them and knowing they would pay him back 'because they are gentlemen of their word'.⁴⁴ Vincenzo Pascoviti, a linen merchant, worked only with his nephew Zorzi, who was based in Corfu.⁴⁵ Giacomo Frangopulo dal Zante was a successful middle-ranking merchant. His mercantile activities in February 1590 included an investment of 420 ducats with a Venetian merchant, the settlement of outstanding accounts with two partners, Giulio Licino and Zuanantonio Trevisan, a significant amount of merchandise bound for Smyrna (Izmir), and the collection of money owed to him by the Commune of Pola; the commune had till April to repay him for the grain he had sold to it. Giacomo's property holdings included three houses in Zante Town and two fields in its outskirts where he cultivated olives and

⁴² ASV, *Consiglio dei Dieci*, parti comuni, reg. 4, fols 56v (Samariari), 156v (Negron), and 10r (Piero da Modon and Mazo Hebreo). Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, pp. 121 (Barelli), 122–24 (Curcumeli), 128–29 (Condolignoti) and 130, 132, 138–40 (Vergi).

⁴³ Hocquet's study remains the definitive work on the salt trade: Hocquet, *Le Sel et la fortune de Venise*.

⁴⁴ 'perchè sono gentilhomini de parola': ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 203, 18 June 1586.

⁴⁵ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 769, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 401, 16 August 1548.

grapes. Diana and Camillo, his sister and brother-law, managed the Zante holdings. Giacomo must have had a great deal of respect for Diana's managerial skills because after Camillo's death she became sole manager of the properties. Paola, his wife, was his heir, and she had full control over all of his Venetian affairs. Giacomo Frangopulo was one of the few Greek men to entrust the management and eventual control of his entire estate to women.⁴⁶

Another middle ranking merchant from Zante was Andrea della Vigna, a moneylender, slave trader, investor, and property owner with interests in Venice and his native Zante. In January 1545 Andrea had a ship under construction in Jacopo Roditi's shipyard and a mast ordered from Alvise di Albori. Various associates owed him a total of fifty-seven ducats, which he was anxious to collect. He left clear instructions in his will regarding the completion of the half-finished ship and its mast (he had already paid for both in full) and its cargo. He also organized the settlement of his debts and the leasing and sale of some of his slaves. Della Vigna's closest associates were his wife Regina, his brother Demetri, and his brother-in-law Zorzi Novacho. A small number of Zachynthian merchants, among them Marco Samariari, were the only business associates outside the family circle.⁴⁷ Frangopulo and della Vigna were not excessively rich, but through their varied commercial interests they accumulated a comfortable level of wealth. They worked with different people but maintained an inner circle drawn mainly from family, close kin, and compatriots. They were no different from most merchants of their class and standing.

But working with family had its drawbacks. There were disagreements, and unresolved private tensions could have commercial impact. It was in everyone's interests that differences be resolved as quickly as possible, and arbitration was the most effective way to do so. Manoli Caliga from Napoli di Romania arrived in Venice in 1540, along with hundreds of his compatriots. As a refugee he applied for and was awarded a position in the office of the superintendant of tinkers (the *gitadore* or *soprastante alli stagni*). Then in 1544 Manoli's brother Nicolò arrived, and he too wanted to 'participate in the said office'. Manoli said no, and the brothers had a serious falling out. Naupliot friends stepped and urged them to settle their differences and resume a working relationship that had been interrupted by war and exile. The arbiters did this because their commercial relations with the Caliga were being compromised, so it was in everyone's interest to resolve the issue. In August 1547 the Caliga agreed to 'settle

⁴⁶ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 594, Girolamo Luran, fols 38v–39v, 17 February 1590.

⁴⁷ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 41, 13 January 1545.

amicably' their affairs. In the presence of their notary, Manoli Caliga agreed to pay Nicolò three hundred ducats, which was the latter's share of the income from the tinkers' office.⁴⁸

Brokerage was one of the most popular commercial professions. The Board of Trade issued licences, initially to native-born Venetians only but eventually to subject people and foreigners.⁴⁹ That did not stop a very large number of brokers (*sanseri*) working without a licence. This vexed licenced brokers because they had to pay duties on the goods they traded, whereas unlicensed brokers paid nothing. In December 1565 four licenced brokers, Francesco di Demetri Litino, Triphon Exandrino, Nicolò Malipiero, and Alvise Verde, complained to the Board of Trade about the high number of illegal brokers at the Rialto. The four said unlicensed brokers were not contributing their share of taxes and insisted the Board of Trade punish them.⁵⁰ In all likelihood, it was the fear of being caught and fined that motivated unlicensed brokers to apply for licences rather than the ire of legal brokers. Alvise Rosso from Cyprus worked illegally from 1579 till 1590, at which time he applied for and was given a licence. Hieronymo Magagnati, another unlicensed dealer at the Rialto, applied for a licence in May 1581, saying he did not want to run the risk of being caught and fined because the fines were substantial.

Merchants like Frangopulo, della Vigna, Rosso, and Magagnati, and the hundreds of mariners who engaged in trade, occupied the middle and lower rungs of the mercantile ladder. Some earned just enough, others a little more than enough. None achieved great wealth because they had neither sufficient capital nor expansive networks to do so. They also lacked resources and know-how, qualities that distinguished wealthy merchants from everyone else. Rich Greeks used their wealth to become richer. Their focus was on trade, but they also invested in property and new technology, asked for and received highly lucrative licences and income-bearing state offices, and they married well, to women with substantial dowries. They had well-established commercial networks in their homelands and the territories of the *Stato da Mar*. Once they settled in Venice, they maintained these links and then expanded into new

⁴⁸ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10642, Agostino Pellestrina, fol. 195r-v, 3 August 1547. The document offers no explanation for Nicolò's four year absence.

⁴⁹ On the organization, duties, and work of Venetian brokers, see Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, pp. 36–42 and 69–76.

⁵⁰ The peititon is in ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 1, fol. 213r, 23 December 1565. The *Messetaria* was the magistracy responsible for the imposition and collection of broker and brokerage taxes.

markets and acquired new associates. They employed large numbers of people as servants, managers, secretaries, factors, sailors, and captains. Many owned properties in Venice, the *Terraferma*, and the sea empire. They preferred working with family, though they also went into partnerships with other Greeks and Venetians but hardly ever with each other. Theirs was a small group with more than its fair share of personal and professional rivalries.

Elite Merchants

Throughout the century, Greek elites numbered no more than a handful of families. The most prominent among them were the Vergi of Corfu, the Cuvli of Napoli di Romania, the Seguro and Samariari of Zante and the Curcumeli and Condolignoti of Crete. What follows is a look at how they created wealth and, in some cases, lost it.

The Vergi were cotton and grain merchants and shipowners. The three brothers Mathio, Alexandro, and Demetri had been in Venice a long time; Mathio was doing business with Venetian merchants as early as 1519.⁵¹ Vergi ships sailed to all the major eastern Mediterranean ports, Sicily and England. The brothers worked together and with other family members, kin, and Corfiot friends. They had commercial dealings with a few Venetian and Greek merchants, but never with other Greek elites. Corfu remained the focus of their commercial activities throughout the century. The family had many employees based there and spent a great deal of time on the island. The Seguro were Zante's largest landowners and held high offices in the island's colonial administration. Giacomo Seguro was *sopracomito* of Zante from 1510 to the early 1530s; after his death, his three sons held the position in turn.⁵² The family owned ships and traded heavily in currants (which grew abundantly on Zante), oil, and grains. Seguro merchants could be found on Zante, Venice, Naples, Otranto, and other important port cities on the Italian peninsula. Vergi and Seguro daughters married patricians, and in this way both families acquired elite kin.⁵³

The other Zachynthians were the Samariari brothers, Marco and Giacomo. Marco, the eldest, had been in Venice since the early 1520s, and Giacomo

⁵¹ Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, p. 138.

⁵² In the overseas possessions, a *sopracomito* was the official in charge of reviewing the accounts of a territory's offices.

⁵³ For the currant trade, see Fusaro, *Uva Passa*. On marriages between Seguro women and patricians, see Burke, 'Our Daughters and Our Future', pp. 178–181.

arrived in 1534. Their estates in the Morea supplied a good deal of the grains they traded. Marco was a shipowner, merchant, and investor. While his main focus was on the grain trade (mainly in cereals), he also invested heavily in new technology (printing presses) and publishing houses. Giacomo would eventually become the richest man in the community. He owned houses and vineyards on Zante, and his Venetian properties included houses in San Giovanni Nuovo parish and his own large three storey *palazzo* in San Basso. In 1550 he invested four thousand ducats in the Venetian mint, the Zecca, and this money 'made a good return'.⁵⁴ Like Marco, Giacomo mainly traded in grains. Unlike his brother, however, he had a more extensive commercial network that included partnerships with several patrician families: the Gradenigo were his bankers and good friends, the Salamon and Moro close associates. His mercantile ties to the Moro might have been the impetus for his niece Imperia's marriage to a Moro. His closest Greek partners were Andrea Curcumeli, Pietro Condolignoti, and Demetri Vergi. He seldom worked with his brother.

Samariari's vast holdings, set out in the inventory of his house, clearly illustrated the extent of his wealth, his tastes, and his commercial interests. The rooms were furnished with beautifully crafted cupboards, chests of drawers, and tables, and chairs. The furniture was expensive and included many chests (*casse* and *casette*) and a *credenza*, a sideboard or serving table found exclusively in grand houses. Thick, richly decorated carpets and rugs covered the floors. The walls were draped with wall hangings and religious artwork.⁵⁵ Samariari owned valuable pieces of gold and silver jewellery such as rings, bracelets, earrings; these were set with precious stones like pearls and emeralds. He also had expensive silver cutlery, especially forks and silver, gold, and bronze bowls.

His account books for the years 1565–86 (he died 30 August 1586) listed over four hundred contracts, receipts, IOUs, and letters of exchange as well as the names of creditors, debtors, and commercial partners. Samariari sold letters of credit and loaned money to hundreds of people: merchants, artisans, sailors, even to Gianpietro Anzelieri, the notary who prepared his will.⁵⁶ He traded in jewels and rich fabrics. The inventory listed furs, ermine, silks and linen, vel-

⁵⁴ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 204, 9 April 1580.

⁵⁵ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 6511, Paolo de Grandis, fols 64v and 65v, 31 August 1586.

⁵⁶ The inventory of Samariari's house is in ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 6511, Paolo de Grandis, fols 64v–71r and 78v–83r. Anzelieri prepared the will and the codicil, ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 204, 10 January 1582. There is also a cedula, prepared by another notary nearly seven months after Samariari's death: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 1265, Cesare Ziliol, no. 91, 2 March 1587.

vet, and fur-lined cloaks, wool and cotton dresses, coats, dressing gowns, vests and shirts, oriental waistcoats (*dulcimani*), and boxes full of religious clothing; among other things, Samariari sold religious vestments to the clergy and to monastic communities.⁵⁷ His books and papers included Greek and Latin bibles, breviaries, private ledgers, and, surprisingly, the ledgers of the Greek *scuola* covering his tenure as guardian.⁵⁸ Besides his account books, the only other books in the house were a Greek breviary, an unbound book in Greek, and a book of the Epistles and the Evangelists in Latin.⁵⁹ In several other rooms Paolo de Grandis, the notary conducting the inventory, found more 'sacks full of books and papers', noting that some of the books were very old. There were so many bags of books and papers that he feared he would not have time to do a proper inventory of each. In the end he satisfied himself with a notation that due to time restraints he could not provide full accounts of the bags' contents.⁶⁰ Samariari did not have a wife or children. After his death his wealth was distributed among relations (two nieces in Venice and one in Zante), friends, and the Venetian and Zachynthian organizations he supported. None of his heirs became merchants, at least not in Venice, and after 1586 no other Samariari of significance appeared in the sources.

Samariari's story illustrates two problems facing wealthy Greeks: the absence of family and the difficulties of retaining wealth for more than a generation. The experiences of two Cretans, Pietro Condolignoti and Andrea Curcumeli, highlight the vicissitudes of commercial success, especially without the backing and support of a large family. Condolignoti came to Venice in the early 1520s. Most of his income came from shipping and the wheat trade; he held several licences to import wheat from Crete. Between 1533 and 1553, he captained his

⁵⁷ *Dulcimani* (or *dulimàni*) were waistcoats or undergarments worn by Greeks and Turks. The fashion became popular among working-class Venetians in the early part of the sixteenth century. The inventory makes it clear that Samariari bought and sold a large variety of fabrics and also had clothing made up for sale. The list of clothes, fabrics, furniture, and furnishings is in ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 6511, Paolo de Grandis, fols 65r–66r, 31 August 1586.

⁵⁸ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 6511, Paolo de Grandis, fol. 65v, 31 August 1586. Samariari was *scuola guardian* (chairman) in 1567 and again in 1577 and served on several *scuola* committees in between. It is odd that the *scuola* would have allowed a guardian to take its ledgers, since these belonged to the institution, not the individual. Samariari's may have been copies.

⁵⁹ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 6511, Paolo de Grandis, fol. 65r, 31 August 1586.

⁶⁰ 'Diversi libri, et scritture, che per brevità di tempo non furono inventariate' (Diverse books and papers, that due to the brevity of time, cannot be inventoried): ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 6511, Paolo de Grandis, fol. 65v, 31 August 1586. Samariari had two navigational maps, but de Grandis does not provide descriptions of either.

own ships or worked for other shipowners, and looked after his far-flung interests along the eastern Mediterranean and Portugal.⁶¹ He kept agents on Crete and Zante and worked with both Greek and Venetian merchants. In 1553 he stopped travelling and became a sedentary merchant. By then Condolignoti had established a large commercial network. Unlike other wealthy merchants, he did not favour Greeks from his own *patria*, nor did he conduct business with family members. He had three sons, Demetri, Paolo, and Giorgio, and they lived with their father in Venice for a while. There was no mention of a wife. His family did not feature in his commercial activities nor are there references to them in his will.⁶² His closest associates were Andrea Curcumeli, the Corfiot merchants Zorzi Eparco and Atanasio Callio, and the patricians Giacomo Bragadin and Francesco Contarini. He died on 1 October 1570 in Venice. It is not known what became of his wealth after his death.

It is unclear when the brothers Andrea and Alessandro Curcumeli came to live in Venice, but by the late 1520s their commercial careers were well established there.⁶³ Andrea was the more successful of the two. He owned property in Crete and traded in fabrics, grains, and wine (mainly malvasia and muscat). In recognition for his services during the wars of the late 1530s and early 1540s, the state awarded him grazing lands in the plain of Lassithi.⁶⁴ Andrea's clients and partners included Greek and Venetian merchants, but his closest associates were Alessandro and the other Venice-based Cretans. Of the thirty-three merchants he had dealings with between 1542 and 1547, thirteen were Cretan; nine were Greeks from other places (Napoli di Romania, Zante, the Mani, Corfu); seven were patricians from the Bragadin, Zane, Giustinian, and Bon families; and four were of unknown backgrounds. Andrea Curcumeli had more non-Greek associates than any of his contemporaries.

⁶¹ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 6488, Paolo de Grandis, fol. 78r–78v, 24 February 1560.

⁶² ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 280, Zuanmaria Celega, no. 619, 12 September 1570. Condolignoti died 1 October 1570, and the inventory of his house took place on 6 October 1570. The inventory is in ASV, *Cancellaria Inferiore*, Misc. Notai Diversi, b. 41, no. 31. He did not mention his sons or any other family in his will.

⁶³ The brothers enrolled in the Greek *scuola* on the same day in 1527 and renewed their memberships in 1533: Pardos, 'Alphabetical Catalogue of the First Members', Part A, p. 343; Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, pp. 185 (Andrea) and 228 (Alessandro). Alessandro remained a *scuola* member until 1564.

⁶⁴ Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, p. 122. The Lassithi plain remains one of the richest agricultural regions of Crete.

The brothers jointly owned several ships, and Andrea was part-owner of one with one of the Bragadin.⁶⁵ Six of the eight captains working for Curcumeli in the mid-sixteenth century were Cretans, one was from the island of Sifnos and another from Napoli di Romania.⁶⁶ Curcumeli ships sailed to all the major eastern Mediterranean ports and as far north as Flanders. The brothers entrusted their cargo to a handful of captains they worked with. At times, this trust was misplaced, and this, plus a series of poor investments and unforeseen disasters, eventually led to the loss of Andrea Curcumeli's wealth. In 1540 captain Zorzi Nufri did not properly fulfil the obligations entrusted to him by Curcumeli and his Florentine business partners, and this cost everyone considerable sums of money. The patrician Marin Zane made an agreement with Curcumeli in 1551 to import wheat to Venice from Crete, but some of Zane's money went missing. Subsequently, one of Curcumeli's ships was seized by the authorities until he repaid Zane in full.⁶⁷ This episode cost him thousands of ducats and blemished his good name. Curcumeli also had to deal with natural disasters common to maritime trade and the capture of some of his ships by pirates and the resultant ransoms he had to raise to get them back. By the early 1550s, most of his wealth was gone. He died on 27 October 1556.⁶⁸

The Condolignoti and Curcumeli accounts show how difficult it was to keep wealth, especially in the absence of a large family and good networks. By the end of the century there were no Samariari, Curcumeli, or Condolignoti of any significance in Venice. But the Vergi and the Seguro were there, sons, grandsons, cousins, and nephews carrying on the work of earlier generations. Another family, the Cuvli, were there too and in very large numbers. By the late 1520s they had transferred their wealth and their family and relations from their homeland to Venice and, in the process, eventually created a commercial empire lasting over 150 years.

Like the Vergi, Samariari, and Curcumeli, the brothers Canachi and Marco Cuvli were already comfortable before they brought their families to Venice. In 1548 the Senate awarded Canachi and his four sons salt licences and 131 ducats

⁶⁵ Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, p. 123.

⁶⁶ The six Cretans were Manoli Comità, Zuane Dapiran, Zuane Fuschi, Nicolò Litino, Nicolò della Canea, and Zorzi Schiavo. The other two captains were Marco Sfachiotti da Sifnos and Zorzi Nufri di Napoli di Romania.

⁶⁷ Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, p. 123.

⁶⁸ ACPV, *registri dei morti*, reg. 1, San Giuliano, fol. 5r: '27 Ottobre 1556. Messer Andrea Curcumeli sta in Cha Balbi non era in notte'. Curcumeli lived in the Palazzo Balbi.

a year from the treasuries of *Terraferma* subject cities. This was compensation for the loss of Cuvli properties and wealth when Napoli di Romania fell to the Turks, regardless of the fact that the family had moved to Venice long before that event.⁶⁹ Canachi's commercial interests included the cloth (mainly silk) and grain trade. A breakdown of his mercantile activities between December 1548 and May 1549 reveals the extent of these interests. In that period Cuvli secured the services of sailors, captains, and travelling merchants to carry his goods to the Flemish and eastern Mediterranean markets, sending out to and importing goods from ports in the Morea, Cyprus, Syria, Alexandria, Napoli di Romania, Constantinople, and Volos. He rented space on Venetian and Greek ships, often using ones owned by Andrea Curcumeli, but this was the only commercial contact between the two men. He preferred working with his compatriots: out of the twenty-five merchants Canachi had dealings with in the period 1540–45, eleven were from his homeland and five came from towns and regions of the Morea (Monemvasia, Lepanto, the Mani region, and Cerigo). He worked closely with his brother and brother-in-law and with three of his sons; the fourth son, Costantino, was a lawyer with little interest in mercantile life. Canachi had no commercial dealings with Venetians or mainland Italians, a pattern maintained by his eldest son and heir, Andronico.

Besides the salt licence he inherited from his father, Andronico Cuvli received an office from the Customs House (*Dogana da Mare*) with the right to pass this on to his children.⁷⁰ He worked closely with his father throughout the 1540s and 1550s and after Canachi's death came to rely on his own trusted agents and the family, especially his younger brother Nicolò, his first cousins, and his uncles. He also bought property in Sant' Antonin and San Severo parishes. Andronico's son Lorenzo was a successful merchant and property owner in his own right and, like his father and grandfather, a leader in the Greek community. Outside this close family circle, the Cuvli preferred the company and commercial expertise of other Naupliots. Only Nicolò Cuvli slightly broke with family tradition. He too traded in cereals, but he also owned several ships and invested his money in printing presses. Like Andronico, Nicolò acquired properties, in Sant'Angelo, San Severo, and San Pietro di Castello parishes. His business associates were his immediate family, then other Naupliots. But

⁶⁹ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 29, fol. 177v. These awards were not based on real hardship: they were meant to be compensation for any property or rights people lost in the Ottoman takeover. The Cuvli, like many others, leased some of their privileges to third parties.

⁷⁰ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 29, fol. 167r, 20 April 1548.

Nicolò also had close ties with patricians from the Dolfin, Barozzi, Contarini, and Giustiniani families.

From the start Canachi and Marco Cuvli established the pattern that more than four generations of Cuvli followed: trade, invest wisely, keep an eye out for new opportunities, be cautious, and work only with those you trust, values held dear by all successful merchants. As their wealth grew, the family acquired more properties. Andronico di Canachi bought a palazzo in Sant' Antonin parish, which became the residence of the eldest son. He provided his three daughters with their own houses, substantial dowries, and properties on the *Terraferma* and in Venice.⁷¹ His first cousin Andronico di Marco spent his early years as a travelling merchant acting for himself and on behalf of his father, uncles, and cousins. In his later years he worked from home and employed factors to look after his interests abroad. The Cuvli, like the Vergi and Seguro, were a large, extended family, and their compatriots were numerous. Their commercial success eventually brought them greater social recognition with the marriages of Cuvli daughters and granddaughters to notable Venetians and the acquisition of *cittadini originarii* status.

Four factors distinguished successful people from everyone else. The first was family, a large one with many children and several branches. This allowed for intra-family partnerships and meant that wealth was not alienated. The second factor was vision, that is, looking for new ventures, expanding into new markets, trading in a variety of goods, and diversifying through investments in property and the new technologies. The third was permanency. Men like Pietro Condolignoti, the Curcumeli brothers, and Giacomo Samariari were wealthier than the Seguro, Cuvli, and the Vergi, but Venice was not their real home. They were long term, temporary visitors whose families and kin mostly remained in their *patrie*. Venice was the home of several branches of Seguro and Vergi and all the Cuvli. These families recognized how important integration was to their survival. In every generation several Cuvli, Seguro, and Vergi daughters, and one or two sons, married elite Venetians. The three families acquired patrician and *cittadini originarii* in-laws and kin and became a part of the world of privilege and opportunity.

⁷¹ On the family's properties, see p. 29 and footnote 11, p. 29.

Women at Work

Discovering what kind of work women did is not easy because most women did not identify themselves by profession as readily or as often as men. In fact, the only women who listed an occupation most of the time were servants and nursemaids. Yet Greek women worked because, like Greek men, they had to. Immigration was particularly difficult for women because when they moved to Venice many left behind, or abandoned, small plots of land that had contributed to the family income either through rent collection or the sale of produce. Refugee women were particularly vulnerable because they lost markets and properties when the Ottomans conquered their *patrie*.⁷² The most popular occupations among Greek women in Venice were household service and commerce.

Out of the 173 Greeks who listed their occupation as servants (*massere*), 131 were women. Single women dominated the profession (60 per cent) and most lived in shared accommodation, often with other women who worked as servants. The remaining 40 per cent were either married women or widows, and the latter had a slight numerical edge over the former. Greek servants mostly worked in Venetian homes because very few Greek households employed a servant, a fact borne out in the 1592 census. In San Martin parish, for example, only two Greek households (out of sixty-five) had a live-in servant, and in San Giovanni Nuovo and Santa Trinità parishes no Greek home had servants. In San Severo only seven out of eighteen households did so, and in Sant' Antonin just twelve out of ninety-one Greek households employed servants. Generally, the homes of the wealthy had between four and six servants, while artisan and lower-ranking merchant and maritime households had one or two, often none. Neither ethnicity nor religious rite was significant in the employment of servants. The very wealthy Lorenzo di Andronico Cuvli had three servants, all non-Greeks, while his three sisters had both Greek and non-Greek staff. Naturally, Greeks were often preferred, especially if the householder did not speak Italian. For example, all the servants in Francesco Soderini's house were Greek-speaking Cypriots, like the family; Cecilia Negroponte, Francesco's wife, and one of the couple's daughters-in-law did not speak Italian, which probably explains Soderini's preference. First-generation elite Naupliot and Cypriot householders preferred men and women from their respective *patrie*, and, in some cases, the servants had emigrated with the family. It was also more common in refugee households for servants and their masters to be close, more

⁷² Refugee women who lost properties in the Ottoman takeover of their homelands turned to the state for assistance. See pp. 147–51.

like friends; whether the experience of war and exile had a bearing on this is unclear.⁷³ However, in the long run employers judged servants on the quality of their work, and servants sought out employers who treated them decently and paid well.

Greek servants also found employment with elite Venetian families. Fiorina was from Cephalonia, and she had no family in Venice. She worked for the Anselmi brothers, Valerio and Anzolo, and along with their other servants lived in their palazzo in San Giovanni Nuovo. The Anselmi were *cittadini originarii*. The brothers had two sisters, both nuns. By all accounts Fiorina and her employers had a close relationship. In her will, she left 'the few things that I own' to them: some boxes with her personal belongings and ten ducats for the sisters. The brothers inherited her small estate and were obliged to distribute Fiorina's clothing and some monies to poor Greek women. Like Fiorina, Cali da Coron was on her own and lived in her employer's home. She had worked as a servant in the patrician Leonardo Diedo's palazzo, but after his death her main job was to care for Caterina, his widow.⁷⁴ Fiorina and Cali were, like many female live-in servants, either childless widows or women with no family in Venice. Andriana Betti also worked for a family of *cittadini originarii*, the Uberti. Her employer Antonio Uberti was clearly a person Betti and her husband, Francesco da Cipro, trusted. Before leaving for the Lazaretto in 1575, the couple authorized Uberti to settle their debts, collect any money owed them, and, in case of their deaths, to look after their daughter, Anna.⁷⁵ After her recovery, Betti returned to work for the Uberti.

A good number of women owned properties such as houses and fields in their homelands, or in Venice or *Terraferma* towns and countrysides. Efrosini Corsaro owned twenty-eight *pie* (metric feet) of olive groves in her native Corfu that she leased to a local farmer. Another Corfiot, Lisabeta Cingo, owned a vineyard there and employed a nephew to look after it, gather the fruit, and produce oil for sale. Marietta Tapinò collected rents from her Cretan properties that included olive groves in the countryside outside Candia Town and a house in the town. Fiorenza Conomo da Cipro leased her house in Pola

⁷³ For the relationships between servants and masters, see Romano, *Housecraft and Statecraft*, especially Chapters 3 and 6.

⁷⁴ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 1243, Giulio Ziliol, no. 260, 7 July 1612 (Dracopulo); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 2, 17 March 1587 (Andriana Betti); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 131, Pietro Bon, no. 129, 9 February 1505 (Cali da Coron).

⁷⁵ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 171, 10 November 1576.

(Istria) and fifteen fields (*campi*) outside the town.⁷⁶ Properties like Cingo's and Corsaro's did not produce enough income to allow one to live comfortably. At best they supplied the owner with a little extra cash and would eventually be passed down from mothers to daughters. Conomo and Tapino were rent collectors. They employed others to manage their properties and collect rents. Both women were financially independent.

Greek women were also merchants, investors, moneylenders, and shopkeepers. Married women and daughters worked alongside artisan husbands, brothers, and fathers. However, they earned less than their men, and, if they practised a trade, they could not become masters.⁷⁷ Erini Mendrino's husband was a wine merchant and after his death she ran the business on her own. A few merchant women engaged in international trade through hired factors or in a few cases, they travelled with their merchandise to Mediterranean port cities. In September 1573 Despo da Giannina was preparing for a voyage to Syria where she regularly conducted business. In her absence her agent in Venice, Zuanmaria di Jacobi, looked after her affairs. A contract signed on 4 September 1573 set out what Despo expected of him while she was in the Levant. di Jacobi had to recoup monies owed her and pay any debts incurred during her absence. She was waiting to collect a payment in gold coins and jewels; before he cleared that transaction, di Jacobi was instructed to take all the gold items to be weighed, but only on Zuanemaria Tasso's scales because his were the only ones she trusted.⁷⁸ Iacomina di Napoli di Romania was always on the lookout for good investment opportunities. She knew where to find the best deals and get the lowest interest rates. Iacomina's main economic activity was buying and selling fabrics. She used the better fabrics like linens and silks as collateral to raise money for other investments. She also worked as a broker, albeit an unlicensed one.⁷⁹

Brokerage was as popular an occupation among Greek women as it was among Greek men. Women invested money on their clients' behalf and acted

⁷⁶ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 157, 28 December 1546 (Corsaro); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 143, 10 May 1554 (Cingo); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, GP Anzelieri, no. 331, 1 January 1578 (Tapino); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 157, Antonio Brinis, no. 374, 30 September 1595 (Conomo).

⁷⁷ Hacke, *Women, Sex and Marriage*, p. 21.

⁷⁸ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 4849, Nicolò Doglioni, fols 97v–100r, 4 September 1573.

⁷⁹ In May 1548 Iacomina borrowed money from Canachi Cuvli to invest in a venture her brother-in-law Zorzi had recently undertaken. Zorzi traded in Malta and Cyprus. ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10643, Agostino Pellestrina, fols 122v–123r, 7 May 1548.

as agents between merchants and moneylenders. Female brokers worked informally and mostly illegally because very few were licenced. There are only three known cases of women asking for brokerage licences (*sanserie*). They all date from the early seventeenth century, and all three women were daughters of deceased brokers. When a broker died, his widow, his sons — or if he had no sons, his daughters — could petition to inherit the licence. In many cases the heir would then lease the licence to a third party. It is not clear whether the three women wanted the licences to work as brokers themselves, or if they intended to lease them. If it was the latter, then the licence owner received a percentage of the income from the person who leased it. However, it was against the rules to lease a licence because legally it belonged to the person who purchased it and practised the trade. Obviously the rules were not diligently enforced, or perhaps exceptions were made in the case of women licence holders.⁸⁰

Female brokers had more female than male clients, perhaps because women generally had more difficulty securing loans and most preferred the services of other women. Margarita Litino operated her own brokerage independently of her husband, Francesco di Demetri Litino.⁸¹ She loaned money but used the services of other brokers to raise cash for her own investments. Margarita worked mainly with other women brokers, and most of her clients were women. In March 1549 she had hocked some of her personal effects to colleagues to raise money for an unspecified commercial venture. Margarita owed one of them, a dona Dorothea, two ducats of an eighteen-ducat loan and had recently repaid another, dona Caterina, the twenty-six *lire* she owed her. At the time, Margarita was also waiting for the return of some fabric she had pawned, and had in her possession an item belonging to another Greek woman, Thomasina, as collateral for the twenty-seven *soldi* she had loaned to her.⁸² Anastasia Zimbletto's mercantile interests went beyond Venice. Her client list included several Greek and Venetian elites. In May 1602 four people owed her three hundred ducats: a woman in Pola (110 ducats), the patrician Teodoro Balbi (a hundred ducats), the Cypriot noblewoman, Elena Martinengo (forty ducats), and her godmother, Signora Paulina (fifty ducats). Paulina was negotiating a

⁸⁰ ASV, *Ufficio della Bolla Ducale*, Grazie del Maggior Consiglio, reg. 8, fol. 32v, 16 April 1621 and reg. 9, fol. 139v, 22 July 1621; ASV, *Cinque Savii*, risposte, b. 145, fol. 24v, 4 December 1629. I want to thank Natalie Rothman for alerting me to the references on women brokers.

⁸¹ On Litino see Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, pp. 29–35 and 198–99; also Burke, 'Francesco di Demetri Litino, the Inquisition and the Fondaco dei Turchi', pp. 89–95.

⁸² ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 1211, Antonio Marsilio, no. 795, 6 March 1549.

second loan from Zimbletto and had left with her a string of pearls as collateral. At the same time Anastasia was trying to raise twenty-five ducats to invest in a commercial venture. To do this she pawned three pairs of her earrings and two sets of sheets.⁸³

Marina Chiriaculi had a long list of brokerage contacts as well as extensive commercial activities. Chiriaculi was born in Venice around the mid-1550s. Her parents, Thodarin da Coron and Bianca, were tailors. The couple had four children, all girls, and gave them dowries commensurate with their status. Marina used part of her dowry to finance her many commercial activities. She bought and sold fabrics (especially linens), made investments, acquired property, and collected rents. In January 1593, following the death of her first husband, Marina Chiriaculi presented herself before the office of the *Visdomini* to reclaim her dowry. She said its value was six hundred ducats, but the judges gave her only 488 ducats because Marina did not present a marriage contract as proof of her marriage to her late husband.⁸⁴ In January 1623, aged about seventy, she made her will. She had been married and widowed twice but had no children of her own. There was a stepson, Demetri, her second husband's boy, as well as her sisters' children. Her three sisters were the main beneficiaries of her estate. Marina was illiterate so she dictated her will to her confidant, Thomio Zuanfurnari, and he translated for the notary.⁸⁵ She had three hundred ducats invested with Mano Zuanfurnari, her broker, good friend, and tenant.⁸⁶ As this paid a good interest — seven per cent — she asked Mano to reinvest the capital for another three years. Marina also owned several workshops that she rented to artisans. Some were located in her house in Sant' Antonin parish, the others elsewhere (she did not specify). Her niece Cattarinella was one of the executors of the estate; the other was Mano Zuanfurnari, but Cattarinella had

⁸³ Anastasia's will is in AAIEV, b. 18, fasc. 231, fols 1–5. Zimbletto and her husband, Zuannuchio de Rames, married on 14 July 1599. He died the following year. Anastasia died four days after making her will, on 27 May 1602 and once her debts had been paid and IOUs collected, her estate went to hers and Rames' two-year-old daughter, Laura.

⁸⁴ Bellavitis, *Famille, genre, transmission à Venise*, p. 70.

⁸⁵ AAIEV, *Testamenti e Donazioni*, reg. 217, 10 January 1623, fols 91r–92v; a cedula (23 January 1623) preceded the final will. There is an earlier will in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 842, Marino Renio, no. 546, 21 February 1579. Chiriaculi died on 23 January 1623; the death notice is in *Gli atti di morte dei Greci*, ed. by Maltezos and Ploumidis, p. 70.

⁸⁶ Marina Chiriaculi did not explain the relationship between Thomio and Mano Zuanfurnari, nor did she indicate if Mano was the artist of the same name who had once been Tomio Battà's apprentice.

the greater responsibilities. Chiriaculi instructed her to collect the rents owed by the tenant-artisans and to sell all the workshops ‘at a good price’ and then to collect other monies owed to the estate. The cash from the sales and debt collections along with the three hundred ducats Mano held for her should be put into ‘a secure place’, that is, where the money earned a healthy interest. Marina Chiriaculi could not read or write, but her business, numeracy, and memory skills were excellent, and in her lifetime she made some very good investments that allowed her to own her own house, live comfortably and give generously to her family and her friends, to charities, and to the Greek church.

Professionals

Professionals were teachers, scholars, diplomats, middle- to high-ranking office-holders, scribes, copyists, doctors, lawyers, and notaries — occupations that attracted the few rather than the many (129 individuals). Many people in this group were from families that had supported and co-operated with Venetian authorities in the sea colonies. Once in Venice they used their contacts to win lucrative administrative offices for themselves, their children, their kin and their compatriots.⁸⁷ Another group of professionals invested their time and money in new technologies, while a small number took up law, scholarship, teaching, and medicine. Professionals had a high level of education and training.

Public Office-Holders

Positions in public administration were not sinecures. Holders were required to do the work set before them; they were not allowed to rent the position to a third party. Positions remained in a family for a long period, as long as individual office-holders proved capable. Otherwise, they were open to competition at the end of the holder’s tenure. Several Greek families won important offices and kept them in the family for two or more generations. The accounts below describe the different kind of work people holding these offices performed.

The Nassin family had been *capi dei stratioti*, fief holders, and citizens in their native Napoli di Romania from the mid-fourteenth century. Their knowledge of the local area, familiarity with Ottoman officials in nearby Argos, and fluency in Greek, Italian, and Turkish made them indispensable to the town’s

⁸⁷ O’Connell looks at the relationship between local elites and Venetian administrators in the territories of the *Stato da Mar*: O’Connell, *Men of Empire*, especially Chapters 2 and 6.

Venetian administrators (*rettori*). After the fall of Napoli di Romania, they moved to Venice along with hundreds of other Naupliots. In January 1545 Nicolò Nassin petitioned and was awarded the priorate of one of the state's quarantine stations, the Lazaretto Nuovo, for himself and after his death, his eldest son, Zorzi.⁸⁸ Thereafter, the Nassin continuously renewed their claim to the priorate. Nicolò held the position until his death from the plague in 1555. Zorzi then took over until he too died during the 1576 plague (death was one of the drawbacks of this office). Zorzi's brother Zuane then succeeded him, and after his death (from natural causes), another brother, Fiorino became prior. Despite the obvious dangers, the posting came with many benefits. It paid well: priors received a salary of eighty ducats a year and were provided with free housing. They lived on the island with their wives and children. Much of their work involved administrative duties, especially keeping accurate records of the sick and the dead. They were also responsible for purchasing medical and other supplies, paying workers, and examining merchandise coming into and leaving Venice. The prioress was not paid a salary, but she was still expected to care for patients, especially the women and children. She also served as prior when her husband was called away from the island. Prioresses had some medical training, or acquired it quickly when they moved to the Lazaretto. For example, Cecilia Maraveglia, Zorzi di Nicolò's wife, was in Venice proper tending the sick at the outbreak of the 1576 plague but had to return to the island to help look after the large number of people who had been transferred there.⁸⁹ The Lazaretto Nuovo priorate remained in Nassin hands until the middle of the seventeenth century.

The Nassin situation was not unique because other families held long-term offices. In January 1547 the Senate awarded the recently vacated post of custodian (*guardian*) of the Ghetto to the Naupliot refugees Catharina Cathario and her daughter Lugretia.⁹⁰ Custodians were always Christians, the only Gentiles allowed to live in the Ghetto. *Guardiani* enforced the regulations imposed on Ghetto residents by the state. They opened and closed the gates, ensured all

⁸⁸ The award is in ASV, *Provveditori alla Sanità*, b. 729, fols 66v–67r, 24 January 1544 (mv). The family history was recounted in greater detail by Nicolò's second son Zuane when he became prior: ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 6, fol. 287r, 27 May 1579. For the organization and functions of the *lazaretti*, see Crawshaw Stevens, *Plague Hospitals*.

⁸⁹ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 193, Marcantonio Cavanis, no. 261, 14 April 1576.

⁹⁰ 'A dona Catharina Cathario da Napoli di Romania sia concesso in vita soa, et di Lucretia sua figliola il luogo di guardian in ghetto ultimamente vacato': ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 29, fol. 146r, 31 January 1547.

gates were locked during important Christian holidays (especially Lent and Holy Week), and checked that windows looking outwards from the Ghetto were sealed so no Jews could be seen, again particularly during Lent. They also reported any absences from the Ghetto after sunset, which implied they knew the residents well. The Jewish community paid the custodian's rent and salary. At some point Lugretia Cathario married a mariner, Francesco Cipriotto, and they had two children, Antonio and Alvise. The family all lived in the Ghetto with Catharina. Francesco was killed, possibly at Lepanto (1571), and Lugretia died of plague in 1576. In July 1580 an aged Catharina Cathario submitted a new petition asking that her grandsons be allowed to succeed her as *guardiani*. She argued that as they were their mother's heirs, by rights the position should be theirs rather than have it opened to competition. This was granted, but a time limit was placed on the award: the two young men could only hold it for twenty years. Ten years later, on 29 January 1590, Antonio and Alvise submitted their own petitions. They asked for the award to be extended for their lifetimes, just as it had been for their mother's and grandmother's. They pleaded poverty, saying the position allowed them to feed and house their wives and children. Both men were caulkers at the Arsenal, but they argued their wages of eighteen soldi a day were not enough to sustain their large families.⁹¹

Other families with long-term leases were the Agiopanditi and the Litino. In 1543 the Naupliot Zorzi Agiopanditi became supervisor of the state abattoirs, and after his death the position passed to his nephews and then his grandnephews.⁹² The broker Francesco di Demetri Litino submitted numerous petitions requesting the guardianship of the future *Fondaco dei Turchi* before he was finally granted the office in 1574. He died in 1579, and his eldest son became the new guardian. The family then held the posting for almost sixty years.⁹³ These four families took their duties seriously and performed them well enough to satisfy the authorities. They always faced strong competition when the time came time to renew their licences. For example, the Litino hold on the

⁹¹ Cathario's petition is in ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 6, fol. 342r, 14 July 1580. The grandsons' petition is in ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 9, fol. 241r, 29 January 1590. Alvise and Antonio won the concession, shared the Ghetto office, and lived in the Ghetto with their families. They did not explain how they were able to fulfill both their Ghetto and Arsenal commitments.

⁹² The decision granting Zorzi Agiopanditi the position is in ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 27, fol. 72r.

⁹³ On Francesco di Demetri Litino's tenure at the *Fondaco dei Turchi*, see Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, pp. 197–210, 234.

Turkish *fondaco* was always fragile. Angry innkeepers constantly complained to the authorities about the loss of their Ottoman clients, who, after 1574 had to live in the *fondaco*. Nevertheless, each of the families kept their positions for three or more generations. This indicated that the authorities were satisfied with their work, or at least preferred people they knew and had some control over. There were possibly other, unstated reasons in the families' favour. The Nassin maintained close ties with the Venetian families their fathers and uncles had served in Napoli di Romania. They had great-uncles, uncles, and cousins who had fought for Venice during the wars of Ferrara and the League of Cambrai, while the sons, nephews, and grandsons of these men were now protecting the *Serenissima's* territories in the Ionian Islands, Cyprus, and Crete. The Litino relied on their broker network and their extended family to back up their claim to the *Fondaco dei Turchi*. The Agiopanditi and Cathario had the advantage of being part of the close-knit Naupliot circle, with its handful of powerful families who were quick to talk to the right people in support of their compatriots.

A very small number of Greek men held high office. Francesco Cavopenna was a senior secretary in the Chancery and dealt with civil matters. Chancery secretaries specialized in particular fields, and those with senior positions like Cavopenna had to be *cittadini originari*.⁹⁴ The humanist philosopher Marco Mussuro held several academic and public offices during his short life. He had the chair in Greek at Padua (1503–09) before moving to Venice to become reader in Greek at the Chancery School (1512–17). In 1516 Pope Leo X appointed him Latin bishop of Gerapetra (Crete) and Monemvasia, and in turn the Venetians asked him to represent their interests in Rome. He translated correspondence between the sultan and the doge into Latin and Italian (dispatches between Constantinople and Venice were written in Greek). He was a public speaker and orator, responsible for reading government announcements in public places. Mussuro also pushed Venetian officials to find a suitable place for Bessarion's books, but with little success. He died in 1517.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ The Cavopenna name (also Cavopena/Caopenna/Caopena) appears in the list of *cittadini originarii* families in da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, p. 75. Two of Francesco Cavopenna's Chancery decisions are in ASV, *Avogaria di Comun*, Misc. a Civil, b. 260, fol. 28r, 30 August 1581 and fol. 30r, 29 March 1582. The Cavopenna were originally Naupliot citizens and fief holders. Like the Nassin, they had acted as emissaries between the Venetian *rettor* and Ottoman officials in the Argolid. For the Nassin and Cavopenna families' relationship with the *rettori* of Napoli di Romania, see *The Greek Correspondence of Bartolomeo Minio*, ed. by Wright and Melville-Jones, pp. 17, 19, 27, 115, 289.

⁹⁵ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, VII, 661; XI, 419; XIII, 486; XIV, 414; XIX, 319; XX, 177.

Mussuro was not the first Greek to interpret for the state, but his activities never went beyond translating documents and dispatches. Teodoro Paleologo and Girolamo Civran were interpreters and translators (*dragomani*), the first men to hold this position in an official capacity. Paleologo was a military man (*capo dei stratioti*) whose knowledge of the Morea and Turkish made him indispensable to the Venetians. He offered his military services to the Republic in 1479 and in 1500 he undertook his first diplomatic mission. After the deaths of his brother, his wife, and a son, he left military service for good and worked as an emissary and interpreter. Civran was Venetian who grew up in Modon, where he learned Greek and Turkish; when the town fell to the Ottomans (1500), he and his family returned to Venice, and eventually he became a secretary in the Chancery. Paleologo's and Civran's duties involved more than translating: they were the link between the state and Ottoman dignitaries in the Morea, Dalmatia, and Bosnia. They accompanied Venetian envoys to these places and to Constantinople and the Levant. They negotiated with Ottoman dignitaries, looked after high-ranking Ottoman visitors to Venice, and used their many contacts to keep ambassadors and other officials up to date with the latest news. Both men earned good salaries which were augmented with special allowances when they went overseas: for example, Teodoro Paleologo received 150 ducats towards expenses when he accompanied Thomaso Contarini to Constantinople in 1528.⁹⁶

The Office of Public Dragoman was not created until after Paleologo's and Civran's deaths (1532 and 1550 respectively). The first person to hold the new position was the Cypriot Michiel Membre. His career began in 1539 when he was sent on a secret mission to enlist the shah of Persia's aid against the Turks. The journey was difficult and dangerous. Membre travelled through Ottoman territory to reach Persia and carried secret papers from the doge to the shah. Had he been caught, he would certainly have been put to death.⁹⁷ But he was clever and quick thinking. He was also fluent in Greek, Italian, and Turkish, and along the way he picked up Persian too. While his mission proved unfruitful in the end, his return to Venice in 1542 and the submission of the account of his travels eventually secured his success. He settled in the city and applied for and received citizenship *de intus et extra* in 1565.⁹⁸ Following Civran's death

⁹⁶ ASV, *Consiglio dei Dieci*, parti comuni, reg. 4, fol. 7v, 26 March 1528. A description of the work of *dragomani* is in Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, pp. 165–86.

⁹⁷ Membre wrote an account of his mission: Membre, *Mission to the Lord Sophy of Persia*.

⁹⁸ ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 1, fol. 188r, 23 October 1565.

in 1550, he was appointed Public Dragoman, an office he held till his death in 1594. In 1587, facing controversy over the high taxes he levied on brokers (his detractors accused him of siphoning off some of the money for himself), Membre was given two assistants, Giacomo de Nores da Cipro and Andrea Negroni da Costantinopoli.⁹⁹ Like earlier *dragomani*, Membre had good diplomatic skills and was fluent in several languages. He was also an important player in the establishment of the *Fondaco dei Turchi*, acting as the middle-man between Ottoman merchants, the state, and Francesco di Demetri Litino.

The Book Trade

At the start of the sixteenth century, the technology of print was still young and required considerable capital investment and a literate workforce. It is not surprising then that press owners also worked as copyists, teachers, secretaries, and scribes. Printing, publishing, and the book trade in general attracted a small but dedicated number of men.¹⁰⁰

Venice had a strong tradition in the copying and production of classical texts. Pioneers like Aldus Manutius hired Greek teachers and copyists to assist in the editing and printing of classical texts. Eventually Greeks set up their own presses and produced literature for humanist scholars throughout Italy and Europe. But they also had their eyes set on the more popular and lucrative local market. Their major clients included the church of San Giorgio dei Greci and the city's Greek populace. The church purchased its prayer books, breviaries, and histories of the lives of saints from Greek publishing houses. These books were written in medieval Greek, the language of the church. However, their biggest customers, as revealed in their inventories, were Greek householders. As well as the icons produced by *madonneri*, many Greek homemakers owned at least one religious book such as a prayer book or a history of the lives of the saints.

⁹⁹ After Membre's death, de Nores and Negroni applied for the position of Public Dragoman. They were both appointed, but Negroni left soon after to become *dragoman* to the Hapsburgs. On Membre's tenure, see Rothman, *Brokering Empire*, pp. 172–78, 191–99, 203–04, 260–64.

¹⁰⁰ The literature on Greek printing and publishing houses is extensive: Abbiati, *Armeni, Ebrei, Greci Stampadori a Venezia*; Follieri, 'Il Libro Greco per i Greci', pp. 483–508; Layton, 'Notes on some Printers and Publishers'; Layton, *The Sixteenth Century Greek Book in Italy*; Layton, 'The History of a Sixteenth Century Greek Type Revised'; Mavroidi, 'Information about Greek Presses in Italy'; Ploumidis, 'Le Topografie Greche di Venezia'; Politis, 'Venezia come Centro della Stampa'.

The two earliest Greek presses were owned by Nicolò Vlastos and Zacharia Calergi, and Andrea Cunadi and Costantino Paleocapa. Vlastos and Calergi, both Cretans, founded the first Greek-owned press in 1493 and incorporated it into a company 1499. The previous year Vlastos had submitted a patent (*brevetto*) to print 'many beautiful and useful Greek books.'¹⁰¹ The company was awarded a twenty-year licence to print religious works, but after two years the partners closed the Venice business and moved to Rome. Their contemporary, Andrea Cunadi di Patraso, established his press in 1516, and like Vlastos and Calergi printed mainly Greek liturgical books. Costantino Paleocapa, a teacher of Greek, was Cunadi's editor, business partner, close friend, and *compare*. He had worked in France, and when he moved to Venice he lived in the home of the French envoy, where he copied classical manuscripts for the French king's library.¹⁰² He also copied Greek classical texts and collected manuscripts for his many clients and for his own library. In October 1518 he was on the ballot to succeed Marco Mussuro for the Chancery lectureship in Greek, but was unsuccessful.¹⁰³ In 1521, following Paleocapa's death, Andrea Cunadi signed an agreement with the da Sabbio publishers to produce a series of Greek liturgical texts for the use of Eastern rite Christians locally and overseas. The project was originally Zacharia Calergi's, but after he moved to Rome, Cunadi took it over. By 1523 Cunadi had produced a considerable body of work, but he died that year and the press was taken over by his father-in-law, Damiano di Santa Maria.

By the middle of the 1500s the number of presses and publishing houses had grown, and printers found work in other parts of Italy. In Venice the presses operated by the Barelli brothers and the cousins Nadal, Cornelio, and Nicolò Mormori catered to the local market. The best known mid-century press was owned by Nicolò Sofianò and Antonio Eparco. The two men were partners from the late 1530s onwards. Besides running their publishing business, Eparco taught Greek in the Chancery school, and Sofianò spent time in Rome, where he worked for the Vatican press under the supervision of Cardinal Marcello Cervini.¹⁰⁴ Sofianò and Eparco also traded, collected, copied, and bought and sold manuscripts for their many clients. One of Sofianò's patrons was the Spanish ambassador to the Republic, Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza; in

¹⁰¹ Abbiati, *Armeni, Ebrei, Greci Stampadori a Venezia*, pp. 77–78.

¹⁰² ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 263, Girolamo Costa, no. 22, 18 October 1521.

¹⁰³ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, xxvi, 125–26.

¹⁰⁴ Layton, 'The History of a Sixteenth Century Greek Type Revised'. For Sofianos's work as a cartographer, see Tolia, 'Nikolaos Sophianos's Totius Graeciae Descriptio'.

1543 he sent Sofianò to Greece to collect manuscripts from monasteries in Thessaly and Mt. Athos.

Presses required substantial capital investment, and to secure finance to support their enterprises press owners sought out wealthy investors. This dependence on outside money was both a blessing and a curse. For merchants like Marco Samariari, Nicolò Cuvli, and Demetri Marmareto, publishing was part of their investment portfolios. Their financial backing increased press owners' chances of capturing and satisfying a growing and lucrative market. Samariari was the main underwriter of the Sofianò–Eparcho house, Marmareto did the same for Basilio Barelli's, and Nicolò Cuvli financed the Venetian Andrea Spinelli's business.¹⁰⁵ Returns were healthy for the larger presses but smaller ones fell by the wayside because they could not attract talent or financial backing to succeed in an increasingly competitive market. Presses also faced difficulties if their backers experienced financial problems, fell on hard times, or died. This happened to the Sofianò–Eparcho house. When Marco Samariari, their press's main benefactor, died in 1546, the firm had to close because it did not have the money to keep going. Samariari either did not provide the funds for the business to keep working after his death or his heirs decided to stop financing it.¹⁰⁶

By the latter half of the century, some Greeks abandoned printing altogether to concentrate on the copying and buying and selling of old books and manuscripts. Two very active agents were Andrea Darmario (or D'Armar) da Malvassia and Manoli Glinzouni da Scio. Darmario spent much of his working life moving between Spain and Italy. If he had a home, it was Venice, where he lived with his wife and children. The early 1560s found him in Trent, working for the bishop of Segovia, who was attending the church council. There he met another Spaniard who would become his major patron and for whom he collected and copied manuscripts. This was Antonio Agustin, the bishop of Lérida.¹⁰⁷ Through his connections to Segovia and Lérida, Darmario met and worked for other Spanish bishops interested in expanding their libraries. Lérida, however, remained his principal patron and client. He defended and protected Darmario, who, it was alleged, was prone to taking advantage

¹⁰⁵ Abbiati, *Armeni, Ebrei, Greci Stampadori a Venezia*, p. 81.

¹⁰⁶ Layton, 'The History of a Sixteenth Century Greek Type Revised', p. 44 n. 44; Mondrain, 'Le Commerce des manuscrits grecs à Venise'.

¹⁰⁷ After his death, Agustin's library was incorporated into the Escorial's: Mayer, 'Towards a History of the Library of Antonio Agustin'.

of some of his wealthy clients. At some point in 1570 Lérída asked the king of Spain to safeguard Darmario's commercial rights from rivals.¹⁰⁸ Darmario continued copying manuscripts and trading in books till the late 1580s. He was not Lérída's only agent. The bishop also used Antonio Eparco (the grandson of the earlier Antonio) and Manoli Glinzouni. Glinzouni was a prolific collector of manuscripts himself, and had his own agents. He also traded in manuscripts and used his Spanish connections to build up his clientele. In his will (11 September 1596), he nominated his friend Domenico de Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador to Venice, as one of the executors of his estate. He did not clarify his relationship to Mendoza, but at the time Glinzouni was collecting and copying manuscripts for the Spanish royal family. It is quite possible he had secured this through Mendoza.¹⁰⁹

Wealthy Greeks invested in printing and publishing, but only a handful became collectors themselves. The majority preferred to concentrate on their commercial, family, and community interests; in the sixteenth century at least, even families with considerable wealth, like the Cuvli and Samariari, preferred commercial investments to spending money on art and books. Inventories of their homes bear this out. Giacomo Samariari only owned a few religious books, cheap editions of the lives of saints and two breviaries.¹¹⁰ With the exception of Nicolò, no other Cuvli supported presses or collected books and manuscripts. The wealthy remained focused on mercantile success throughout the 1500s, perhaps reflecting a certain mindset that put financial security first. Or maybe they still felt uncertain about venturing beyond the familiar.

The Military Profession

The commanders of the Venetian light horse (*capi dei stratioti*) and their men (*stratioti*) were recruited from Venice's Albanian, Dalmatian, and Greek territories. Theirs was the only profession associated exclusively with subject minorities.¹¹¹ *Capi* and *stratioti* had proven records as good fighters and leaders, which is why the state made every effort to retain their services. Officers had

¹⁰⁸ Mayer, 'Towards a History of the Library of Antonio Agustin', p. 265.

¹⁰⁹ AAIEV, *Testamenti e Donazioni*, reg. 217, fols 23v–25r, 11 September 1596.

¹¹⁰ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, Paolo de Grandis, b. 6511, fols 64v–71r and 78v–83r. The inventory was conducted over five days: 31 August, 2–3 September, 10 September, and 19 September 1586.

¹¹¹ The focus here is on Greek and Greco-Albanian fighters. Frequent intermarriages between Greek and Albanian military families makes it difficult to classify *stratioti* as

Figure 3.1:
A *stratioto*.
Image courtesy
of Pavlos Plessas.



regular access to the highest government officials, including the doge. A brief history of this warrior class and their relationship to Venetian authorities illustrates how deeply their interests intersected.

Venice started using *stratioti* in the Morea in the early 1400s, and the majority of officers and troops came from areas ruled by Venice. They defended Ottoman incursions into Venetian territories and fought against the increasing (and inevitable) Ottoman takeover of the whole of the Morea. Some *capi dei stratioti* were descendants of Byzantine nobility, while others were local Moreote lords who in the past had paid homage to the emperor at Constantinople. *Capi dei stratioti* were not *condottieri*. The latter had a reputation for unreliability, switching sides, and being difficult to deal with; *capi dei stratioti* and their men could be difficult too, but in different ways. For one, *condottieri* and their troops were ‘temporary employees’, for lack of a better term.

belonging to a single ethnicity. However, ethnic rivalries did exist and often caused trouble for commanders and Venetian authorities.

Not so *stratioti*. Before the loss of their Morea territories, the Venetians used *stratioti* only when they had to. In 1474 Venice needed more men to ensure its domination of Cyprus, so the state enlisted *stratioti* and infantry companies for the job.¹¹² When the Ottomans threatened the Friuli in the late 1470s, *stratioti* and their commanders were transferred to the *Terraferma*. The Ottoman army was defeated, and in 1479 a truce was signed. Three years later, in the War of Ferrara, more *stratioti* were transferred to the mainland, and once again their role in Venice's victory was significant. Once most of the Morea became Ottoman, *stratioti* were sent to other parts of the sea and mainland territories, where they remained even during the non-fighting season. Officers and men cultivated lands awarded to them by the state, performed policing duties, and eventually moved their families to the towns and islands of the *Terraferma* and the *Stato da Mar* where they served.

The state successfully encouraged commanders and their men to remain in Venetian service by offering generous inducements like security of tenure through long term contracts. This did not happen with *condottieri*-led armies. *Capi dei stratioti* were rewarded with administrative positions in the colonies, land, and generous pensions. Their wives, mothers, and children were entitled to gifts and pensions as well, as long as they took up residence within Venice's frontiers.¹¹³ Sons inherited fathers' commissions, dowries were provided for unmarried daughters, and brave, loyal *capi dei stratioti* were given state funerals. The state acknowledged the services of the men too but saved its highest honours for the officer class. Knighthood, becoming *Cavalieri di San Marco*, was the ultimate honour. In March 1554 Demetri di Teodoro Paleologo was invested as *Cavaliere di San Marco* in recognition of his military prowess and his family's many years of devoted service to the *Serenissima*. In January 1571 the same honour was conferred on Zorzi Renessi, son, grandson, and great-grandson of *capi dei stratioti*.¹¹⁴ There were rewards for the lower ranks too. Mutilated, retired, and wounded soldiers received pensions, as did the families of deceased soldiers. Older *stratioti* who could no longer fight were eligible for minor positions in one of the many offices in Venice or one of its subject ter-

¹¹² James II, king of Cyprus, died in 1473. His widow, Caterina Corner, then ruled but under the 'guidance' of Venetian advisors. She was more or less forced to abdicate in March 1489, at which point Cyprus became part of the Venetian *Stato da Mar*.

¹¹³ Mallett, 'Venice and its Condottieri', pp. 127–28.

¹¹⁴ ASV, *Cancellaria Inferiore*, Doge, Privilegi dei Cavalieri di San Marco, filza 174, fol. 5r, 21 May 1554 (Paleologo) and fol. 28r, 15 January 1571 (Renessi). Demetri Paleologo's father Teodoro was also *Cavaliere di San Marco*.

ritories. Widows and orphaned children were provided with pensions, unmarried daughters with dowries, and sons were promised positions in their fathers' regiments when they turned sixteen. The funding for these awards came from *Terraferma* and *Stato da Mar* treasuries.

In 1482 the position of commissioner of the *stratioti* (*provveditor dei stratioti*) was created. His job was to lead the men into battle, keep them in line, and ensure they received their wages, in order to discourage them from cutting off the heads of those they killed and bringing these to their commander to claim their due: one ducat per head.¹¹⁵ The *provveditor* was also responsible for keeping the peace among officers and men, because disagreements were common and often had serious consequences. There were personal animosities between the men; often ethnic differences erupted and caused serious problems. The men, while loyal to their own officers, did not extend that loyalty to the next person up the chain of command. Tensions and arguments between *capi* were common, and the lawlessness of many officers and *stratioti* meant that troops often had to be camped outside city walls; in Venice, they were usually relegated to the Lido. The most troublesome situations involved Greeks and Albanians.

Two incidents illustrate the difficulties *provveditori* faced with this volatile and well-armed group of men. In September 1500 the Albanian *capo*, Domenego Bosichio, and his Greek counterpart, Thodaro Ralli, were stationed at Udine with their troops. There was an incident, heated words were exchanged between the two men, and Bosichio punched Ralli in front of the governor and another officer. The governor passed sentence: Ralli could punch Bosichio back to even the score, but Ralli also had to promise not to throw a second punch. Ralli refused to do this. As Sanuto notes, 'It is said that for this reason [bad blood] the Greeks and the Albanians they are [in] divided companies.'¹¹⁶ In June 1517 Sanuto reported another incident involving a *capo dei stratioti*. Michali Ralli was walking through San Moise when he was attacked and robbed by some Albanian *stratioti*; he died later that day from his injuries.¹¹⁷ There were enough such instances on both sides to warrant the separation of the two groups and to confine them outside city walls. The *provveditor* then was not only the 'commander in chief' but also the arbiter of disputes and the keeper of the peace. The importance of the *provveditor* was eventually rec-

¹¹⁵ Mallett and Hale, *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State*, p. 78.

¹¹⁶ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, III, 813: 'Dice albanesi e greci sono per questo le compagnie divise.'

¹¹⁷ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, XXIV, 43.

ognized by both Greek and Albanian officers because in March 1515, they petitioned the College to remain under his command rather than that of the *capo* Mercurio Bua. This was at the height of the wars of the League of Cambrai, the worst time for dissension among officers. Two years earlier Bua had deserted (along with his men) his employer, the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian, and joined the Venetians. In return for bringing his sizeable army of *stratioti* to their side, he presented the Venetians with a list of demands. Among these was his insistence that he be appointed commander of all *capi* and *stratioti*. Needless to say, the other *capi* were furious when this news reached them in the field. In the end Greek and Albanian officers put aside their differences and united to stop Bua's power grab. The doge and his councillors agreed, and eventually Bua dropped his demands.¹¹⁸

The *stratioti* were tough fighters, but they were not liked or respected by everyone. Girolamo Priuli describes them as 'anti-Christian, perfidious, born thieves and potential traitors more pernicious to our own side than to the enemy'.¹¹⁹ Early on they established a well-deserved reputation for unreliability, desertion, defying orders when it suited them, and cheating. For example, they had relatives in Greece and Albania to collect pay in their names even as they were being paid in Italy. Their ranks included a good number of convicted murderers, which led Venetian officials to treat them carefully. It was the responsibility of the *provveditori* to send some of the worst offenders home or bring them to justice and punish those who broke the rules. This was easier said than done. For one, *stratioti* were not only very good fighters, they were cheaper than *condottieri*-led troops. They were incredibly loyal to their officers, and in turn the officers were loyal to the Republic: for example, no *capo dei stratioti* and his men defected to the enemy during the nine-year Cambrai wars. The Venetians needed them to win their wars and police their empire.

Much was expected of them. They had to supply their own arms, harness, and horse. They were paid thirty-two ducats a year; it was not until the

¹¹⁸ Bua began his career with the Venetians in 1495, then moved to the Sforza from 1496 to 1500. He served the French kings during the Italian wars, and the League of Cambrai saw him fighting for the Holy Roman Empire against Venetian forces. In July 1513 he defected and remained in Venetian service till the end of his life. He died in 1542 at Treviso where he had retired. Sanuto provides detailed accounts of Bua's demands and the *capi dei stratioti* delegation that came to Venice to meet with the doge: Sanuto, *I Diarii*, xvii, 221, 562; xix, 441; xx, 51–52, 54.

¹¹⁹ Mallett and Hale, *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State*, p. 376.

1570–73 wars that this rose to forty-eight ducats.¹²⁰ To put it another way, a *stratioto* earned less in a year than the *provveditor* earned in a month. It was not enough to live on and feed a family, which might explain the high number of desertions (to return home to their families and fields) and the practice of selling weaponry and horses. Some even resorted to brigandage to make ends meet. Despite Priuli's criticism, they did have positive traits. They showed bravery, speed, and endurance, and these won them promotions, rewards, and pensions for themselves and their dependents. In the *Stato da Mar* they maintained law and order and guarded the coasts and hinterlands from Turkish and pirate raids. On Cyprus they acted as policemen because Venetian officials did not trust the locals: by 1530, six hundred Greek *stratioti* were on the island because officials believed only foreigners (i.e. non-Cypriots) could adequately perform policing and military duties.¹²¹ Sanuto too expresses strong reservations about them (he calls one officer a charlatan), but unlike Priuli he acknowledges their loyalty and expressed genuine sadness when officers, most of whom he knew personally, were wounded or died. He agrees with the sentiments expressed by the *provveditor* Andrea Civran in his letter informing the Signoria of the death of the *capo deistratioti* Giorgio Bosichio. Bosichio died at Taranto. Weak, feverish, and tired from battle, he was bitten by an insect (the letter did not say what kind) and died in three days. Civran wrote in his report: 'Messer Giorgio Bosichio is dead [...]. And I have cause to be saddened, for he had at all times conducted himself like a knight.'¹²²

The maintenance of what was a standing army was not cheap. In December 1508, 57,000 ducats were allocated to *capi dei stratioti* and *condottieri* from the treasury of the city of Brescia.¹²³ This was meant to cover officers' salaries, the wages of their men, and the costs of maintaining the companies. Pay rises

¹²⁰ Mallett and Hale, *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State*, p. 442. The *condotte* usually specified how much each member of the company was paid. Sanuto kept meticulous records of monies allocated to each *condotta*: Sanuto, *I Diarii*, VII, 706–708; XI, 244; XII, 316–17, 418; XIV, 393–95, 533–34.

¹²¹ Mallett and Hale, *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State*, p. 499. The distinctions here are interesting. Cypriots, though Greek-speaking, were not considered to be Greeks (ethnically speaking) and hence were considered unreliable; mainland Greek *stratioti*, however, were deemed trustworthy. Perhaps this was based on the notion that they had proven their loyalty to Venice over time.

¹²² Sanuto, *I Diarii*, XLVIII, 95: 'Messer Georgio Bosichio è morto [...] Et ho causa di dolermi, per haver in ogni fazion ch'io li ho commesso diportatose sempre da paladin.'

¹²³ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, VII, 706–707.

were common, and individual officers were awarded annual increases of varying amounts. The rank and file received slight pay increases too. On 29 August 1547 Helia Cadena da Malvassia, a *stratioto* in the company of Nicolò Clada, received a raise of one ducat, bringing his pay to four ducats a month; Vero Segluero, standard-bearer in the company of Demetri Ralli, received an increase that took his wages to five ducats a month.¹²⁴ *Stratioti* submitted countless petitions requesting wage increases but most of these were turned down.

Both *capi* and *stratioti* could be sure that with their deaths, or, in the case of the lucky ones, retirement from active service, they and their families were looked after. Sons, grandsons, cousins, and nephews were guaranteed commissions. When Manoli Clada died in 1528, his eldest son, Demetri, became *capo* of his father's troops. When Demetri was killed in Puglia the following year, his command went to his brother Piero. The remaining Clada children and their mother were also provided for. They received Manoli's salary of twenty-two ducats a year, plus another fourteen ducats a year for dowries, 'for their [the family's] sustenance and the marriage of the daughters'.¹²⁵ In November 1526, when the thirty-year veteran *capo* Alexio Bua died, the Senate awarded his oldest son (who was already a *capo* in his own right) a pension to enable him to look after his mother and younger brothers and sisters.¹²⁶ Demetri Megaduca, in Venetian service since the 1490s, was commander of the *stratioti* on Cyprus. He died there in April 1533, and his commission was promised to his young son Alessandro when the boy reached maturity.¹²⁷ In March 1519, Mexa Gerbessi sought a promise from the Signoria that his son Gini, who was twenty-five at the time, would be granted a commission after Mexa's death. The Signoria replied that Gini could start serving as soon as possible with his father.¹²⁸ *Stratioti* did not miss out either. In 1532 a pension was granted to the family of Nicolò da Modon, who had been killed in a skirmish below Rome in 1528. Nicolò left a wife and several children. His family received four ducats a

¹²⁴ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 29, fol. 105v, 29 August 1547. *Stratioto* salaries only covered the fighting season.

¹²⁵ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 21, fol. 164r-v, 15 December 1529: 'L'anderà parte che de la provisione, havea el dicto q. Domino Manoli Clada, qual era de ducati xxii per paga siano dati alli doi figlioli mascoli viz. Nicolò et Theodoro, Marulla, Regina et Anzola figliole femine per substantation loro, et maridar de li figliole ducate, 14 [...]. A Piero veramenti figliol mazor resti la compagnia cum ducati, 8.'

¹²⁶ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 21, fol. 28v, 26 November 1526; Sanuto, *I Diarii*, XLIII, 175.

¹²⁷ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, LVIII, 452.

¹²⁸ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, XXVIII, 52.

month from the treasury of Vicenza, and the oldest son was promised a place in a company of *stratioti* when he turned sixteen.¹²⁹

What had started out an effort by Venice to protect its overseas possessions from the Ottomans ended up becoming an established armed force. As long as Venice had borders to defend, the *stratioti* had a role to play. But much changed over the course of the century. The *stratioti* lost their clannishness after decades in northern Italy and the sea territories. They were more settled now that they had their families nearby. Some of the brutality of earlier generations disappeared as wars became less frequent and the focus switched from offence to defence. Many left the profession altogether because after 1571 there were fewer territories to defend and protect: by the end of the century, only Crete and the Ionian Islands remained. In awarding commissions and distributing rewards, stipends, money for dowries, and pensions, the state provided a form of social security to the *stratioti* and their families — the *Serenissima* as benefactor — and in doing so it acknowledged the value it placed on their services.

* * *

In the late fifteenth century, the Greeks emerged as strong and unified communal force. Having settled themselves and their families, they then sought to establish permanent institutions that identified them communally as Greeks; that is, they wanted their own *scuola* and church. This was their way of saying, ‘We are here to stay’.

¹²⁹ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, LVI, 386: ‘Item, soto Roma morite in una scaramuza amazato Nicolò da Modon stratioto, era in la compagnia di Manoli Clada, ha lassà la moier e fioli per tanto li sia dà provicion ducati per paga a la Camera di Vicenza a page 4 a l’anno, e il fiol Nicolò quando l’hava anni 16 sia scritto in una compagnia di *stratioti*.’

Part II

Becoming Venetian

A COMMUNITY'S INSTITUTIONS

By the 1470s the Greeks, still a minor presence in Venice, began to emerge as a communal force. In the next 130 years they created two important institutions; organized, funded, and executed a major building project; and eventually won the support of the state and, grudgingly, of the Venetian church. At the same time, they helped thousands of new arrivals find work and accommodation. These undertakings were time consuming and expensive, and they came with in-built obstacles. That in the end the Greeks succeeded had as much to do with the place they now called home as with their evolution from immigrants to locals, their growing political acumen, and their greater confidence when dealing with officialdom. At the end of the fifteenth century, two issues occupied their minds and both reflected the permanency of this community: one was the need to establish an association to act in the interests of all Greeks and to look after their well-being; the other was to have their own place to worship according to the Greek rite. In short, the Greeks wanted their own *scuola* and church.

Faith and Status

Neither was easily achieved. The major stumbling block was the Greeks' religious status. Some church authorities saw them as schismatics. Two Venetian patriarchs they dealt with the most called them heretics as well.¹ Patriarchal con-

¹ A few points of clarification. In Venice, *patriarch* denoted chief bishop (archbishop). He was always a patrician from a prominent family. Technically Greeks celebrated the liturgy and

cerns centred on the Eastern Church's rejection of the *filioque* and the existence of Purgatory. The Greeks considered themselves uniates; that is, while they followed the Eastern liturgy said in Greek, they were under the jurisdiction of Rome. As uniates they were not compelled to acknowledge the existence of Purgatory or to insert the *filioque* when reciting the Creed. After 1439 uniates recognized the reunification of the Eastern and Latin churches as agreed to at the Council of Florence. In source after source dealing with religious issues, the Greeks refer to themselves either as uniates or as Catholics in the traditional sense of the word. No sources suggest Greeks saw their status differently. Some nationalist historians have argued that while the Greeks presented a uniate front to Venetian religious and political authorities as an expedient to achieve their aims, in their heart of hearts they were thoroughly Orthodox. Others have maintained that Greeks gradually became more Orthodox, that as they integrated into Venetian society they became less uniate, and that by the end of the sixteenth century their religious status had ceased to cause the Latin church concern. This second observation reflects what probably happened, but gradually and over a longer period. It is certainly an area that deserves further examination.

The nationalist view is short on historical accuracy, ignores the facts, presents no evidence, and presumes to know how people thought five hundred years ago. This is not to say the religious status of Greeks did not vex clerics on both sides of the religious argument. But in the early modern period, the distinctions between Eastern and Latin Christianity were not fixed, just as the terms 'orthodox' and 'catholic' were not used to distinguish rite but rather to describe the Christian church. One has to wonder how many Venetians and Greeks could explain doctrinal differences between the two rites. Probably not many. Of course there were differences between the two churches, such as linguistic variations, the use of unleavened bread during the liturgy, and the issue of papal supremacy. But there were also similarities. Church services, for example, were mutually recognizable. Theological distinctions certainly exercised the minds and hearts of Greek and Latin prelates, scholars, monks, and secular rulers, but they did not upset the social equilibrium. That the Greeks enjoyed papal support and protection probably added to their acceptability.

Moves to set up their own institutions began in the mid-fifteenth century. Between 1456 and 1470, there were two well-documented attempts to find

Latins the mass, but Venetian Greeks tended to use the term 'mass' as well, probably because it was more convenient to do so. In the West the language of the church was Latin. There has never been a universal language in Eastern rite churches; instead, each uses the local language, be it Greek, Russian, Serbian, Bulgarian, etc.

a place of their own to worship in the Greek rite. The first was spearheaded by the Byzantine prelate and cardinal Isidore (d. 1463), archbishop of Kiev. Like his contemporary Bessarion, Isidore supported the 1439 unification of the Eastern and Latin churches and was awarded a cardinal's hat for his efforts. Along with Bessarion, he had accompanied Emperor John VIII Paleologos to Italy in 1438 to attend the Council of Florence. The emperor hoped that with church reunification he would secure the help of his fellow Christians against the Ottomans. However, once back home John was unsuccessful in promoting reunification because both the Byzantine court and the people of Constantinople were vehemently opposed to it. Nevertheless, Isidore became papal legate to Constantinople in 1452, but given popular opposition to the Florence agreement this was an empty honour.

Isidore, who was an eyewitness to the fall of the city, fought bravely against the Ottomans. According to one account, he averted certain death by abandoning his cardinal's clothing and donning the garb of a commoner.² He was taken prisoner anyway, and after a brief period of enslavement he escaped, arriving in Crete in July 1453. His was one of the first eyewitness accounts of the fall of the city published in the West. Isidore was in Venice in 1456 and presented the Senate with a papal letter supporting the establishment of a Greek church there. Political and ecclesiastical authorities viewed the proposal favourably, but nothing came of it, probably because of the divergent views of the Venetian patriarch, the papacy, and the Senate. In the view of one nationalist historian, the project failed because Venetian authorities realized that 'the vast majority of Greeks of Venice were firmly dedicated to their Orthodox faith, as their following history proved'.³ Isidore abandoned his endeavours and returned to Rome, where he lived till his death.

We do not know what Venetian Greeks thought of Isidore or his proposal. In fact, we do not even know if he spoke to anyone in the community about his plans. There is no record of contact between community leaders and Isidore. Had he made overtures to the community, he would have found considerable support for his efforts because one of its major concerns was finding a fixed place where Greeks could attend a Greek rite mass. Fourteen years after Isidore's departure, the community acted. In 1470 its representatives petitioned the Council of Ten for the right to hear the mass said according to the

² Another version had it that Isidore and the commoner exchanged clothing. This would not have boded well for the commoner.

³ Manoussacas, 'The First Permit (1456) of the Venetian Senate for a Greek Church'.

Greek rite in a church where they could gather and meet as a corporation. They nominated a chapel in the church of San Biagio as a suitable place. Before 1470 Greeks attended services in whichever church Greek priests were allowed to officiate. Usually these were San Giovanni in Bragora, San Martin, San Severo, San Lorenzo, and San Biagio. Greek priests would have been uniates, otherwise they would not have been allowed to say mass in a Latin church. Their appointment was sanctioned by the Venetian patriarch since no priest, of whatever rite, could say mass without his approval, and anyone caught breaking the rules was punished. The patriarch kept a very close watch on Greek priests, but then he did the same with all his priests. Heresy, apostasy, anything that deviated from accepted practice was every prelate's nightmare.

At the same time, some Greek priests were the source of their own troubles. The most common accusations, subsequently proven, were saying mass in private homes. This was illegal in both rites since the mass could only be said in a consecrated place. Punishments for breaking the law varied. At best, priests were fined and banned from saying mass for a time; at worst, they faced a period in exile. Despite several unfortunate episodes involving troublesome priests, the Council of Ten agreed to the Greek request and nominated a chapel in San Biagio: 'in the city of Venice no services may be held according to the Greek rite in any place other than San Biagio, as has been resolved on other occasions.'⁴ This effort, on the part of the *popolo*, not an outsider like Isidore, provided the impetus the community needed to cement its position in Venice. The chapel at San Biagio represented the growing confidence of the entire community. It defined, for the moment, the religious status of the Greeks as within rather than outside the Venetian fold. And it set in motion greater plans that pointed to the creation of permanent community structures.

The Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci

The Venetian *scuola* was an integral part of public life, a religious confraternity run by lay people.⁵ No patrician could hold office, so it was very much the preserve of the *popolo* and *cittadini*, though patricians were members. *Scuole* were

⁴ ASV, *Consiglio dei Dieci*, parti miste, reg. 17, fol. 138r, 28 March 1470. There is an extract in English in *Venice: A Documentary History*, ed. by Chambers and Pullan, p. 333.

⁵ On confraternities, see Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century*; Pullan, *Rich and Poor*; Mackenney, 'Continuity and Change in the *scuole piccole* of Venice'; Mackenney, 'The *scuole piccole* of Venice'.

devoted to charity, good works, devotional duties, and the administration of bequests. Any group could form a *scuola*; in fact, this was one way people representing particular interests manifested their identity. Guilds, professional bodies such as doctors and lawyers, foreigners, and ethnic and religious minorities all had *scuole*. The state closely supervised them and their activities and set out standardized rules and regulations for their establishment and administration. *Scuole* boards (*banche*) were run by non-noble lay people, and they were responsible for the *scuola*'s activities, including the appointment of clerics to celebrate mass and perform the offices of the church. Membership was capped — usually at 250 men for *scuole piccole* — but there were no limits on the number of women. They were welcomed as members as long as they paid their dues (*luminaria*), but in many *scuole* they had no voting rights or administrative duties.

In early 1498 a group of Greeks submitted a petition to the Council of Ten and to the Signoria seeking permission to set up their own *scuola*. They based their request on precedent, that the state had already given other foreign communities this right. In fact, the Greeks were very late arrivals on the scene. The Armenians established their *scuola* in 1253, the Albanians in 1443, the Dalmatians in 1451. It was now time for the Greeks to have theirs. The language of the Greek petition reflected the themes of devotion, sacrifice, and service to Venice:

For the Greeks have at all times been good and loyal servants of this most holy State, and have striven at every opportunity to meet the needs of Your Serenity, both on land and on sea [...] especially in the conquest of Dalmatia, where they thought it a glorious thing to spill their blood for the expansion of your state.⁶

On 28 November 1498 the Council of Ten approved the establishment of the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci. Meetings were held in the Greek chapel at San Biagio. The *scuola*'s name and patron saint reflected the occupation of so many Greeks, that of mariners and others associated with the sea. Its organization and functions followed those of all Venetian *scuole*, that is, it was set up to oversee the performance of charitable and religious acts such as liturgies, prayers for the dead, the distribution of alms, and the administration of properties and other gifts. San Nicolò soon became the community's official voice, its administrative centre, and its advocate in its dealings with the state and the Latin church. Membership was open to those from the Greek-speaking world and

⁶ AAIEV, *Mariegola Vecchia*, reg. 219, fol. 27r, 1498. The translation in the text is from *Venice: A Documentary History*, ed. by Chambers and Pullan, pp. 333–34.

anyone with Greek (in the broadest sense of the word) connections, including non-Greek spouses and other Eastern rite Christians. Membership was *not* based on faith; as the membership registers clearly show, both Latin and Greek rite adherents became members. The foundation of San Nicolò came about because of *popolano* involvement and leadership. The petition to the Council of Ten was signed and submitted by Zuane di Santa Maura, shipwright (*marangon*), and Alessio Varvari da Corfu, apothecary (*specier*). The two men then served, respectively, as the first custodian (*gastaldo*) and first vicar (*vicario*) of the newly formed *scuola*.⁷ Once again, an institution representing a permanent community was the creation of its working women and men. The significance of this should not be underestimated because it did not remain this way for long.

For the first thirty-two years (1498–1530), the membership, the governing board (*Banca*), and its committees reflected the *scuola*'s and the community's working and lower middle-class origins. The majority of members were mariners, servants, and artisans. Office-holders represented twelve different artisan professions. Only ten men listed a mercantile occupation in the first register, whereas fifty-two did so in the second (1533–62), and most of those arrived in Venice between 1540 and 1541. The second register then represents the years that marked a change in the socio-economic make-up of the *scuola*'s committees, a change due to the arrival of large numbers of refugees from Napoli di Romania and, to a lesser extent, Monemvasia. In terms of numbers the Naupliots were never the community's largest immigrant group; taken together, Cretans and Cypriots greatly outnumbered them, but they came from those islands' different cities and towns. The more cohesive Naupliots came from one place and publicly at least presented a unified front. After 1571, Cypriots arrived in Venice in great numbers. That was when the *Banca* instituted a form of proportional representation so that no one regional group dominated the *scuola*'s offices and committees.

Most Naupliots were *popolani*: sailors on Venetian and local fleets, people who had worked for the state in some minor capacity, small-time merchants, and artisans. But there were also well-to-do merchant families, like the Cavopenna, Cuvli, Mormori, and Nassin, and they played an increasingly important role in the Greek community and, by extension, in the administration of the *scuola*.

⁷ ASV, *Consiglio dei Dieci*, parti miste, reg. 17, fol. 138r. Both men sat on the *Banca* at various times between 1498 and 1512. Their involvement in the establishment and then the early years of the *scuola* features in Pardos, 'Alphabetical Catalogue of the First Members, Part A', pp. 312–13. The title *gastaldo* was replaced by *guardian* after 1570.

The Naupliots changed the *scuola* in several ways. After 1540 fewer artisans and seafarers became members, but there was a surge in the number of merchants, and this meant the *scuola*'s socio-economic make-up changed. In the first registry (1498–1530) the membership included ninety-six artisans, twenty-two seafarers, fifteen military men, and ten merchants. In the first seven years of the second registry — that is, between 1532 and 1539 — there were forty artisans, seven mariners, and twenty-two merchants. The biggest change came after 1540. Members associated with seafaring and military affairs remained fairly steady, but only sixteen artisans were enrolled. The number of merchants had risen to thirty-two. The change was even more dramatic among office-holders. Between 1498 and 1531, artisans dominated all *scuola* offices. A slight shift occurred in the years 1532–39, when the ratio of merchant to artisan office-holders was 2:1. Between 1540 and 1600, the men who ran the *scuola* were almost exclusively drawn from the wealthiest members of the merchant class. In that sixty-year period nineteen men served as *gastaldi/guardiani*. Thirteen of the nineteen declared their occupation: eleven were wealthy merchants, one was the prior of the Lazaretto. Only one was an artisan.⁸

This shift away from the artisan and seafaring classes in favour of elite merchants did not reflect a move towards greater wealth among the general population. If one relies solely on *scuola* membership, as some earlier historians have, then it is easy to conclude that Venetian Greeks were upwardly mobile and economically successful; however, an analysis of the membership for the period 1498–1600 clearly shows that most members continued to come from the maritime and artisan occupations, despite the presence of many well-to-do families after 1540. That majority, however, no longer held administrative and decision-making positions. The rise in class, wealth, and status was evident only among the men holding the highest offices. If any further evidence is needed to confirm the low socio-economic status of the majority of Greeks, it is that at no time did San Nicolò achieve its complement of 250 members, that in fact it

⁸ Pardos and Mavroidi both examine *scuola* membership between 1498 and 1530 (Pardos) and 1532 and 1563 (Mavroidi). They analyse the members' socio-economic backgrounds, provide short biographies of some of the more prominent members, and discuss the functions of the *scuola*. Pardos emphasizes the working class origins of the membership during the *scuola*'s first thirty years; Mavroidi does not discuss this, nor does she draw attention to the growing elitism of *scuola* officials. Pardos, 'Alphabetical Catalogue of the First Members, Part A', pp. 321–24; Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, pp. 75–103. Mavroidi published the names, tenures, and duties of *scuola* guardians between 1498 and 1558: Mavroidi, 'The First Presidents of the Greek Brotherhood of Venice'. For the names and tenures of *gastaldi/guardiani* from 1524 to 1801, see AAIEV, *Catasti*, reg. 33, fols 308r–312v.

struggled to exceed more than one hundred.⁹ Many people simply could not afford to pay *scuola* fees, while others lacked the incentive to do so. Mariners were away for much of the year and probably would have found it difficult to justify paying for something they were unable to participate in year round. Artisans and sailors automatically belonged to their guilds' *scuole*, so to join another one meant a financial burden that for many was simply beyond their means. Women earned less than men and had even less incentive to become members.

However, San Nicolò dei Greci still had to raise money to purchase wax for candles, unleavened bread for masses, provide charity to the poor and the destitute, and pay the salaries of Greek priests. The *scuola* had two sources of income: membership fees and bequests. Fees covered the basics, like wages, wax, and candles. Coffers were replenished through bequests. There are two inventories of *scuola* properties for the years 1501 and 1518. These include objects acquired or purchased like gold and silver candlesticks, rugs, books, jewellery, and silver forks. There were also more precious items, such as gospel books, and some relics, including the remains of San Nicolò, the *scuola*'s patron saint.¹⁰ More elaborate and valuable gifts like houses, country properties, and large amounts of money did not begin coming in until the community, via the *scuola*, purchased land for the new church, by which time priorities had shifted. Money, or rather raising alot of it, became imperative. This probably explains why men who knew about money and commerce and had large and influential networks replaced artisans and seafarers in the *scuola*'s offices. Given the major task the community now had before it, the socio-economic shift was inevitable.

The establishment of the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci was significant because it signalled a shift from an immigrant to a permanent community. It provided a focus for all Greeks by performing the duties expected of *scuole*: saying prayers for the dead; maintaining the chapel at San Biagio; distributing poor relief; caring for widows, widowers, and children; and helping newcomers with housing and work. After 1498, the *Banca* became the community's official voice *vis-à-vis* the state and the Latin church because it had the authority to represent the interests of the entire body of Greeks, a right the state recognized. It was on behalf of the community via the *Banca* that Greek *capi dei stratioti* submitted a petition in 1511 asking permission to buy property on which to build a Greek rite church. It was the *scuola* that oversaw construction of the

⁹ Koutmanis, 'Observations on Greek Settlement in Venice'.

¹⁰ AAIEV, *Catasti*, b. 49, fols 1–3.



Figure 4.1: Bas relief, St George slaying the dragon. Venice, Calle dei Greci.
Photo courtesy of John Burke.

new church and organized loans, permissions, fund-raising activities, and hired builders, architects, artists, and other contractors, all the while fulfilling its charitable and religious functions. Thus in the space of a few years, the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci evolved from a devotional organization to one with huge financial responsibilities and a political voice that spoke on behalf of all Venetian Greeks.

The Church of San Giorgio dei Greci

With the help of our Saviour Jesus Christ and of the holy Martyr Saint George, the Greek immigrants and those travelling through Venice, with their own efforts built this Church, so that they may worship God according to their ancestral tradition.¹¹

Increased immigration between 1470 and 1510 was the main reason the Greeks needed their own church. Among the immigrants were people from the sea territories and dependents of the *capi dei stratioti*, many of who had made Venice their home. The arrival of more people and the presence of a small yet highly professional group of military men with access to the centres of power briefly put Greeks in a favourable position. The chapel at San Biagio could no longer hold everyone: 'our people have increased to such an extent that they cannot be accommodated either inside or outside it (the chapel)'.¹² On 4 October 1511, a group of *capi dei stratioti* petitioned the state on behalf of the community for the right to purchase land to build a church. This petition set out the reasons for their request. First, the increase in population had made the chapel in San Biagio untenable: 'such a mixture of people, tongues, voices and service, both Greek and Latin [...] so that [...] God himself cannot understand our prayers or theirs (the Latins) for the confusion that arises from such variety and miscellany'.¹³ The community also needed a place to bury its dead instead of having them interred in cemeteries in parishes around Castello. The petition revealed that Greeks were prepared to use political muscle to achieve their aims. It reflected confidence, first exhibited in 1470 and again in 1498, that they increasingly saw themselves as part of the Venetian system, not apart from it.¹⁴

The request upset the apple cart, to put it mildly. It created tensions and disagreements because it brought to the forefront issues concerning the Greeks' religious status. The fragility and ambiguity of this status probably explains why the *Banca* chose men with influence, power, and access to high officials

¹¹ Inscription near the entrance to San Giorgio dei Greci. Attributed to Michiele Sofianos, 1564.

¹² *Venice: A Documentary History*, ed. by Chambers and Pullan, p. 335.

¹³ *Venice: A Documentary History*, ed. by Chambers and Pullan, p. 335.

¹⁴ This desire to have their own place to meet and worship was not unique to Venice; it happens wherever large numbers of immigrants settle. Personal accounts of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Greek immigration offer insights into the Greek experience in countries as diverse as Russia, Australia and the United States. *The Greek Diaspora in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Clogg.

to present the community's case. The *capi dei stratioti* played a pivotal role in the establishment of a Greek church. They knew the right people to talk to, men who would ensure the petition received a fair hearing. Their spokesperson, Teodoro Paleologo, was the most respected leader of the *capi dei stratioti*. Paleologo had enjoyed a close relationship with Andrea Gritti, the *provveditor general* responsible for the *stratioti* in the early years of the sixteenth century. Their relationship was further cemented when Paleologo came to Gritti's aid during the siege of Vicenza in October 1513.¹⁵ By the time Gritti became doge in 1523, tensions between the Greeks and their supporters on the one hand, and the patriarch of Venice on the other, had reached boiling point. Gritti tried to defuse the situation, but even the doge was unable to mollify the Venetian patriarch.

That was still in the future. In 1511 the Signoria and the Council of Ten were prepared to give the petition a sympathetic hearing. It was a good petition, carefully thought out and well written. It drew heavily on precedent. The Greeks, loyal and good Christians, asked nothing more than the recognition the state had already granted to others like the Armenians and the Jews:

to show us that in your eyes we are no worse than the Armenian heretics and the Jewish infidels who here and in other parts of your lordships' dominions have synagogues and mosques for worshipping God in their own misguided way. On the contrary, we believe that your lordships regard us as true and good Catholic Christians, and will treat us as such by granting us this most holy favour.¹⁶

The community was organized to meet the challenges of such a large and expensive enterprise. The *Banca* appointed a committee with the responsibility of overseeing the building project and raising the necessary funds for the church's construction. It recruited prominent *capi dei stratioti* to present the petition and shepherd it through the many magistracies and offices of the state. Individual *capi dei stratioti* volunteered their time to help the *Banca* with a variety of tasks, especially in its negotiations with the state. However, with the exception of Paleologo, this initial involvement of so many *capi dei stratioti* was the only time they took an active 'hands-on' role in the affairs of the community. They never again united to speak with one voice about the Greek community's needs. The church, then, like the *scuola* before it, was the creation

¹⁵ The relationship between Paleologo and Gritti is explored in Bugh, 'Andrea Gritti and the Greek Stradiots'. Gritti was doge from 1523 to 1538.

¹⁶ *Venice: A Documentary History*, ed. by Chambers and Pullan, p. 335.

of commoners with help, when required, from their powerful compatriots. In recognition of their role in securing permission, the new church was named San Giorgio dei Greci after the patron saint of soldiers. In July 1526 Teodoro Paleologo informed the Signoria that the community had bought a suitable property in the parish of Sant' Antonin at a cost of three thousand ducats.¹⁷ The foundation stone was laid in 1536, and construction completed in 1573; the campanile was built between 1587 and 1603. The entire project cost 18,000 gold ducats. The cost was covered by massive loans, private contributions and gifts, and a one-off ten-year levy on all Greek ships entering Venice.¹⁸

The Early Years: 1511–40

The preceding summary does not convey the serious difficulties the community faced when it set out to build its church. Some of these were of its own making, while others were either unforeseen or beyond its control. Suffice to say that the community faced three challenges. The first was the intransigence of the patriarchs of Venice, especially in the early period, the 1520s and the 1530s. The second concerned divisions within the community that spilled out into the public arena and did nothing to endear the Greeks to their supporters. The third was the community's somewhat difficult relations with the ecumenical patriarchate in Constantinople. Hanging over these challenges, like a black cloud that would not move, was the question of their religious affiliation, an issue that played into the hands of their opponents.

All the same, the Greeks had considerable support. The papacy was on their side, especially during the pontificates of the Medici popes. Throughout the period, but more so in the early years, the state took up the Greek cause. There was a great deal of popular goodwill as well. In fact, one cannot emphasize enough the level of acceptance by the authorities and the public. The Greeks chose to establish their religious foundations at a time when Venice and the Roman church faced very serious issues and threats. For the state, these included the contraction of the *Stato da Mar*, the wars of the League of Cambrai that devastated its *Terraferma* possessions, shrinking markets as northern states moved into the Mediterranean, and the constant Ottoman naval menace. In light of these events, Greek demands for their own church hardly constituted a serious threat to the Republic. However, a refusal to grant permission would have alien-

¹⁷ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, XLII, 101.

¹⁸ A Greek ship was defined as having a Greek captain, owner, or both.

ated a large segment of its soldiers and mariners. The Latin church, which would soon be battling the onslaught of Protestantism, saw even the slightest threat to its authority as an act of war. Its aim was to hold fast. For the papacy this translated into a more benign attitude towards Greeks, who, after all, were *not* Protestants. The patriarchs of Venice saw things differently because they could not and would not condone the establishment of a church that might fall outside their jurisdiction. Initially, the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople, the head of the Eastern church, did not interfere, nor did the Greeks ask for his support.

Insofar as the Greeks were concerned, there was no ambiguity concerning their religious status. They were uniates. The state and the papacy believed them. Pope Leo X (Giovanni de' Medici) and his successors, Clement VII (Giulio de' Medici, Giovanni's cousin) and Paul III, gave their support to the 1511 petition and followed up with decrees to this effect. Four papal briefs, issued on 3 June 1514, 18 May 1521, and March and May 1526 confirmed the Greek position: they had the right to worship *in rito greco* and to remain under the protection of the papacy. Leo X's 1521 brief also supported the construction of a Greek church in Venice while Paul III's 1540 brief confirmed their right to worship according to the Greek rite in a Latin diocese.¹⁹ But Venetian patriarchs would not accept either the Greek position or the papal decrees. Both Antonio Contarini (1508–24) and his successor, Hieronymo [Girolamo] Querini (1524–54), considered the Greeks schismatics *and* heretics despite the decisions of the Council of Florence. They were also suspicious of the growing relationship between the community and Eastern church officials at Constantinople. Previous patriarchs had not taken such a negative stand; for example, they had not objected to Isidore in 1456. The state and the papacy worked to soothe tempers and find a compromise. In the end neither Rome nor Venice let patriarchal disapproval stand in the way. In April 1514 the Council of Ten approved the community's request to purchase a suitable property, a decision sanctioned by Rome. Pope Leo X gave his support and issued the first two bulls (June 1514 and May 1521) in which he approved the construction of a Greek church, its campanile, and cemetery. More importantly these bulls relieved the patriarch of Venice of his authority over the Greeks so that 'Venetian Greeks [...] were no longer subordinate to the jurisdiction of the local patriarch and at the same time the papacy had a permanent representative in the city'.²⁰

¹⁹ ASV, *Compilazione delle Leggi*, serie prima, b. 228, 18 May 1521, 26 March 1526, 8 March 1540, unfoliated.

²⁰ Fedalto, 'La comunità greca, la chiesa di Venezia, la chiesa di Roma', p. 95.

The patriarchs' position in the early 1500s created tensions among themselves and the community, the state, and the papacy. Their opposition was based on principles of faith and adherence to authority. In March 1515 Patriarch Antonio Contarini went before the Council of Ten to express his displeasure over its decision to allow Greeks to purchase land, which he felt went against the interests of the Roman church. As far as Contarini was concerned, the chapel in the church of San Biagio was sufficient.²¹ He reminded everyone present that there were important theological differences between the Eastern and Western churches, differences that both churches acknowledged. Contarini protested and made threats, but neither the state nor the papacy would move on his objections. Relations deteriorated even more after Querini's accession in 1524. For two years, from 1526 to 1528 Querini did whatever he could to stop the project. In August 1527 he went before the Council of Ten with his accusations and a new set of objections: the new church could not be consecrated because the Greeks were heretics; the papal nuncio was helping the Greeks with the construction of the church; a recently published book against Italians had greatly pleased the Greeks; the Greeks had given money to the Signoria to approve the construction of the said church and its cemetery (was he implying bribery or was he merely referring to the costs inherent in applying for permissions?). Besides, he continued, since the Council of Florence had unified the churches, what was the point of a separate Greek church?²² One point, of course, was that very few Greeks could follow the mass in Latin.

In response, the Council of Ten said it had no grounds for refusing the Greeks since they had done everything according to the terms of the 1439 union. On 18 December 1527 Sanuto recorded in his diary that 'many Greeks, among whom was the lord Teodoro Paleologo' appeared in the College where they 'lamented the Patriarch's excommunication of his new church'.²³

²¹ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, xx, 65.

²² Sanuto, *I Diarii*, XLV, 653: 'Vene il reverendissimo Patriarca nostro, domino Hironimo Querini, et volse audientia con li Capi di X. Prima parlò zerca la chiesa greca levata a Santo Antonin, che non la vuol sagrar perchè sono eretici, et è stampà *noviter* uno libro che i pregano contro italiani [...] atento hanno dà danari a la Signoria per poter levar ditta chiesa et sepelir i loro morti. Et fu concluso, che mettandosi uno papa catholico iusta il Concilio Fiorentino quando se uni la chiesa greca con la latina, la sagreria, altramente per niente non volveva.'

²³ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, XLVI, 381–82: 'Vene in Collegio molti greci, tra li qual domino Teodoro Paleologo, dolendosi che 'l Patriarcha ha scomunicà la soa chiesa nova zà tre zorni, et non vol si digi li officii, cosa concessa dal Papa, dal Conseio di X con la Zonta; et più ha fato retenir uno suo papa overo caloiero venuto di Corfù, el qual andava in Ancona. Adeo, di questo il Collegio si dolse.'

Three days before, Querini had placed a decree of excommunication on the Greek church, going against the wishes of the pope and the Council of Ten. It was hoped that in a meeting between the doge and the patriarch, the doge could persuade Querini to remove the ban. But Sanuto held out little hope: 'For the patriarch is obstinate'.²⁴ The situation was so grave that Pope Clement VII became involved. He appointed three mediators, the (Latin) bishop of Limassol (Cyprus), the abbot of San Giorgio Maggiore, and a papal legate to mediate with the patriarch. The three were asked to do what they could to convince him to honour the decisions of the Council of Florence and the papal briefs by lifting the ban of excommunication in time for the Christmas season.²⁵ Querini refused. Five months later, on 5 April 1528 (Palm Sunday), he reinforced his position by saying the ban would remain in place for the remainder of his patriarchate. For good measure, he extended the ban to include any Latin or Greek religious who set foot in the Greek church, a 'profaned and unqualified place', or participated in divine offices there.²⁶

Querini's efforts, like those of Contarini before him, proved fruitless. He was pressured to step back. What had motivated him and Contarini to act the way they did? According to Giorgio Fedalto, neither man could tolerate any community's independence from their jurisdiction. It probably did not help that the Greek church was going up a short distance from the seat of the patriarchate but beyond its direct control. Furthermore, Fedalto argued, the patriarchs 'had used tactics like excommunication with others including Venetian clerics, monks, loyal subjects and even the Signoria — in other words anyone who threatened their position'.²⁷ For the papacy, the matter was clear-cut. As the popes saw it, since many Greeks had fled the Ottoman conquest of their homelands for Venice and other Italian cities, it was the Roman church's duty to give them sanctuary. Besides, it was clear that the Greek request for a church was based on religious decisions adopted in the previous century, decisions that had been accepted by the Roman church as well. The state too had its reasons, never

²⁴ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, XLVI, 382, 'Pur il Patriarcha è obstinato et vol siano calogeri catholici.'

²⁵ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, XLVI, 410–11, 416.

²⁶ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, XLVII, 199–200. 'Per tanto sua signoria [il Patriarca] excomunica et pronuntia excomunicati tutti li altri sacerdoti sì greci come latini che non debbiano andar al ditto luogo come in luogo prophano et inhabile, et ch' in quello non debbino celebrar ne' altri officii divini exercitar, *nec etiam* i corpi di christiani defuncti a quel luogo compagnar, *nè cum* i ditti preti greci excomunicati et irregular participar.'

²⁷ Fedalto, 'La comunità greca, la chiesa di Venezia, la chiesa di Roma', p. 96. The Venetian patriarchate is a very short walk from San Giorgio dei Greci.

publicly expressed, but ones that fit the Venetian penchant for practicality. First, the Greeks had the support of the papacy, and the Venetians were not prepared to challenge papal authority, especially as it was not in their interests to do so — on this matter anyway. As well, there was a harsh reality that the patriarchs chose to ignore but the state could not: Greek workers, particularly mariners and soldiers, constituted an essential part of the labour force in the Arsenal, the fleets, and on the battlefield. Without them and other subject people, Venice would have found it very difficult to build and man its ships and fight its wars.

The state and the papacy acknowledged religious similarities between the two churches, such as the tradition of saying the mass in a language other than Latin (the Greek liturgy was in early Byzantine Greek). The differences between the two faiths were not so pronounced as to constitute a problem for most people.²⁸ In fact, the growth of Lutheranism presented a greater threat to the Roman church. In one sense, the Greeks got their wish because events beyond their world influenced the decisions of their supporters. Since 1470 they had integrated more fully into Venetian society. In 1498 the community had won the right to nominate its own priests, subject to approval by the papacy, the Council of Ten, and the patriarch of Venice. During the interventions of the Venetian patriarchs in the 1520s, this right was threatened, but in 1530 it was reaffirmed by the papacy, bringing the process of the selection of Greek priests into line with those of their Latin colleagues. By 1540 construction on San Giorgio was well under way. The community had survived the worst of the Contarini–Querini years, or so it seemed. The Council of Ten still kept a close eye on the Greeks and everyone else, but at that point it appeared that the most difficult hurdles had been overcome.

Turmoil and Resolution, 1540–71

In July 1540 a precious icon, the Madonna della Crypta, went missing from the Greek church.²⁹ The icon had been brought from Constantinople in the late 1450s by Anna Notara, one of the daughters of Lucas Notaras, the last *megas*

²⁸ Fedalto has argued that the differences between the Latin and Greek churches were not sufficiently important to warrant official scrutiny of the Greek church. He also points out that most people neither understood nor appreciated the subtle distinctions of churchmen. Fedalto, 'La comunità greca, la chiesa di Venezia, la chiesa di Roma.' Private documentation such as wills and testamentary bequests support this view. The blurring of distinctions between faith and ethnicity is examined more closely in the last two chapters.

²⁹ In the late 1520s a temporary structure was erected on the grounds of the future church. This served as the Greek church until the completion of San Giorgio.

dux of the Byzantine Empire.³⁰ The head priest of San Giorgio dei Greci, Papa Nicolò Trizento, and the assistant priest, Anastasio Porfirò, were accused of stealing it. The *Banca* removed the priest and his assistant, and the matter should have ended there, but it did not. The community divided into two factions, those who believed Trizento guilty and those who maintained his innocence. The animosity between the two sides was such that it invited the intervention of the state, the patriarch of Venice, the papacy, and the ecumenical patriarch in Constantinople, and in this way threatened the existence and the independence of the Greek church. Both factions had powerful backers: the pro-Trizento side counted on the support of the Venetian patriarch, none other than Hieronymo Querini himself. The other side called on the legal expertise of the bishop of Padua, the papacy, and the ecumenical patriarch in Constantinople. Soon after the theft was discovered, Trizento and Porfirò were removed from their posts and the anti-Trizento faction chose a new priest and assistant. Trizento appealed against his removal to the Venetian authorities and to the papacy through the papal nuncio. After examining the evidence both bodies reinstated him. Immediately the anti-Trizento faction turned to Constantinople to have that decision overturned. Matters quickly deteriorated after that.

In 1541 Ecumenical Patriarch Geremia I suspended Trizento and threatened excommunication to anyone who cooperated with him. Trizento's response to Geremia was to denounce the anti-Trizento faction before Venetian civil authorities, claiming that in appealing to Geremia, his enemies wanted to place the Greek church under the ecumenical patriarch's control. He also accused his opponents of not supporting the decisions of the Council of Florence. This led Pope Paul III to issue a bull (6 March 1542) retracting the privileges awarded to the community over the years, because the Greeks had shown themselves to be 'unworthy of papal benevolence'.³¹ Two months later, in May 1542 the Council

³⁰ The *megas dux* was like a prime minister but much more powerful. Lucas Notaras and two of his sons were beheaded by Mehmet the Conqueror, while his youngest son Jacopo, Anna, and two other daughters eventually reached Italy. The theft of the icon was not the first time precious items thought to belong to Anna Notara had gone missing. On 6 March 1514 Sanuto reported that a strongbox had been found by a tailor near the Rialto; the tailor had dragged it out of a canal and turned it over to the authorities. The box was beautifully adorned and contained many reliquaries said to belong to Anna Notara (Sanuto called her Anna Matara). The strongbox was examined by the doge and a procurator of St Mark's before being placed in St Mark's sanctuary, where all precious items were kept: Sanuto, *I Diarii*, XVIII, 127. Regarding the life of Anna Notara, see Nicol, *The Byzantine Lady*, pp. 96–109; Ganchou, 'Le Rachat des notaras après la chute de Constantinople'; Burke, 'Surviving Exile', pp. 113–18.

³¹ Tsirpanlis, 'La posizione della comunità greco-ortodossa', pp. 129–30.

of Ten summoned the members of the *Banca* to examine their 'Catholicity'.³² By the end of 1542 the Trizento affair had resulted in the ecumenical patriarch finding the priest and his assistant guilty of theft and excommunicating them, the state declaring them innocent, the patriarch of Venice excommunicating the priests appointed by the anti-Trizento faction, the papacy revoking Greek privileges, and the community split into two hostile camps. The scene was set for a confrontation among the ecumenical patriarch, the papacy, the Venetian patriarch, and the state over the jurisdiction of the Greek church. A resolution had to be found before the Greek position in Venice deteriorated even further.

The years 1540–71 were probably the most difficult for the Greek community. The consequences of Greek in-fighting and the fragility of their religious status is nowhere better illustrated than during these thirty troubled years. Petty and not so petty jealousies had always divided the *scuola's* membership, particularly its officers, not an uncommon occurrence. The first crisis was triggered by the theft of the icon, and this drove a deep wedge into the community for ten years. Then other matters arose, and the factions grew even more aggressive. For example, a *gastaldo* was found to have assumed complete control of the building fund for the new church, which led to questions being asked about his bookkeeping methods. This happened in January 1550, when a compliant *Banca* awarded the newly elected *gastaldo*, Mathio Vergi, the right to administer the church's building fund for three years. There was an immediate outcry from a large segment of the membership but Vergi and his supporters won the day, at least until the next election in 1553 when the new *gastaldo*, Canachi Cuvli, assumed office. Cuvli argued long and hard to retain control of the building fund, but the newly elected officers would not back him. They had discovered 'irregularities' in the account books kept by the Vergi administration (unpaid bills, accounting errors), and it was felt that closer scrutiny was now needed. When Cuvli did not get his way, he directed his anger not at his fellow officers but at Vergi. The two men were already bitter commercial and personal rivals, and over the years they had clashed over control of the *scuola's* committees. This latest incident only added to the bad blood between them.³³ Because the state had jurisdiction over all *scuole*, it took particular interest in what was happening at San Nicolò dei Greci. New factions formed quickly after Vergi announced his intentions to take control of the finances. He further antagonized many members each time he complained to the Council of Ten

³² ASV, *Compilazione delle Leggi*, serie prima, b. 228, 11 May 1542, unfoliated.

³³ Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, pp. 143–45.

and the magistracy responsible for *scuole* about real and imagined infractions of governing codes, electoral infringements, and careless bookkeeping. Thus the Trizento affair was not only the cause of religious and communal tensions, but also the trigger that nearly brought down the community.

In hindsight it is not difficult to explain the causes of animosity and disunity in the community. The arrival of large numbers of immigrants in the late 1530s and early 1540s upset its social balance and caused a realignment among the various groups. Tensions normally simmering under the surface were now exacerbated by financial burdens and responsibilities, and consequently they spilled over into the public arena. The building project was immensely expensive, and *scuola* officers were responsible for raising money and overseeing construction. They were also liable for any debts incurred, so the pressure to find new sources of money was tremendous. At the same time, factions and tensions are a normal part of any community, and the Greeks were no exception. But earlier disputes seemed minor in comparison to what was happening by the middle of the century. Perhaps people felt the community had taken on more than it was capable of dealing with. Only a small proportion of Greeks were *scuola* members, and most of them may have been unaware or misinformed about what was happening. The larger community, the one beyond the *scuola*, strongly supported the building project but did not or could not fully understand the problems that now beset it.

It appears that the *scuola* community had reached beyond itself, that it was finding it difficult to cope with a long term project that constantly required new sources of revenue. A ten-year shipping levy (1546–56) went a long way towards relieving some of the more pressing financial problems.³⁴ But money was not the only issue. Greek priests had no qualms about turning to the Venetian patriarch for support if they felt *scuola* officials had acted against them or their interests. This flew in the face of all the concessions the community had won when it came under the jurisdiction of the state and the papacy. The Venetian patriarch was the titular head of all priests, so in turning to him Greek priests were not contravening accepted practice. However, the combination of factional tensions, the Trizento affair, and then Greek priests seeking the support of the Venetian patriarch, the strongest and most vocal opponent of the Greek church, added to the chaos and bad blood consuming the community.

³⁴ There is a translation of the original document granting the community the rights to the shipping levy in Antoniadis, 'Findings of Studies based on the *extempore* Administrative Books', pp. 468–70. References to the document are also in Ball, 'Poverty, Charity and the Greek Community', p. 141, and Geanakoplos, *Greek Scholars in Venice*, p. 65.

All sides thought they had something to gain if they played their cards right. One group's defeat was another's triumph. Patriarch Querini saw the Trizento affair and the willingness of some Greek priests to seek him out as an opportunity to bring all Greeks under his authority — something which most Greeks of whatever faction did not want. In the meantime, there was mounting pressure from the ecumenical patriarch to assert his control over the Venetian church; this had started early in the sixteenth century but picked up momentum with the Trizento scandal. The state faced serious problems too. It was being pressed to implement the early decisions of the Council of Trent (1545–63) on its territories, something it was disinclined to do. On-going Ottoman threats in the *Stato da Mar* meant Venice needed the backing of all its subject peoples, and the enforcement of Tridentine measures would certainly alienate her Greek subjects, if not others. Finally, Latin Christendom was confronting the consequences of the spread of Protestantism and needed to consolidate the support of friends, both Latin and non-Latin. Powerful secular and religious forces had little time for civil dissent and disturbances. Tolerance and patience were in short supply all around.

The Protestant threat had one positive though accidental outcome: it led to increased contact between the Eastern and Western churches. In 1546 Ecumenical Patriarch Dionysius II dispatched Mitrofanis, the bishop of Caesarea, to Venice and Rome. The official reasons for the visit were to bless the Greeks of Venice and raise money for the church in Constantinople. The unofficial — but in the end, more important — reasons were to sort out the problems of the Venetian community and to bring the Greeks under the authority of Constantinople. Mitrofanis successfully achieved the former but failed in the latter. However, in the process he began a dialogue among Constantinople, Rome, and Venice. The Venetians welcomed Mitrofanis warmly when he appeared before the doge and the Signoria. He carried with him letters from Ecumenical Patriarch Dionysius II and the Venetian *bailo* at Constantinople. After the diplomatic formalities were over, he blessed the new Greek church and set about healing the divisions in the community. Among other things he negotiated an acceptable solution to the Trizento scandal by allowing the priest to hear confessions but not to officiate. He then left for Rome in 1547, where he met with Pope Paul III. After exchanging gifts and meeting with the cardinals, he assured the pope that he had solved the immediate problems in the Greek community and, in light of this, asked him to reconsider his 1542 decision. The result was that Paul revoked the bull of 6 March 1542. Once the community's affairs were fully in order, he issued a new bull on 22 June 1549 reinstating all its privileges.

Following his success in Rome, Mitrofanis returned to Venice in July 1549. There he set up a new board to oversee the *scuola* and appointed his own people to it: two religious and two laymen who were, in essence, the representatives of the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople. The new board had vast powers. It could remove from the Greek church anyone who spoke ill of the Latins and denounce them to the ecumenical patriarch. It could bring anyone who broke community rules to the attention of the papal nuncio or his representative for punishment. It had the right to verify the authenticity of patriarchal documents from Constantinople regarding the Greek church of Venice. It was the only body allowed to communicate the ecumenical patriarch's letters during mass on issues concerning the community. To ensure that his and Constantinople's wishes were observed, Mitrofanis placed the four-man board under the authority of Alessandro Ruggiero, the parish priest and canon of San Pietro di Castello, and the four appointees were instructed to obey him and not to contradict him in any matters 'under pain of excommunication'.³⁵ In essence, Mitrofanis imposed peace among the Greek factions, the Latins, and the community by placing the community under the mixed jurisdiction of the ecumenical patriarch, the papal nuncio and Ruggiero. This was the price he was prepared to pay in return for the bull of 1549 restoring Greek privileges. Given the internal discord, lack of discipline, and the offensive behaviour of some people in the community towards each other, and at times their Latin neighbours, Mitrofanis, ever the realist, decided to act before Venetian secular and religious authorities or the papacy stepped in and took full control of the community.

His attempts to bring the Greek church under Constantinople's fold failed, however, because forces outside his control worked against him. Venice was facing serious religious, political, and diplomatic pressures. Rome was determined to impose Trent on the faithful. In principle the Republic supported this, but not when Tridentine policies posed a threat to its authority and stability. The state worked hard to blunt papal demands. It intervened in the work of the Inquisition and encouraged younger, moderate patricians opposed to outside interference to take up positions in government. It had good, practical reasons for this. The presence of a large numbers of Protestants — about four thousand in Padua alone — in *Terraferma* territories and large minorities in Venice proper demanded the adoption of a policy of tolerance towards 'the other'. In practical terms, this meant a prohibition on the publication of papal bulls that suppressed the rights of Germans, English, Swiss, Jews, and Greeks. In short,

³⁵ Tsirpanlis, 'La posizione della comunità greco-ortodossa', p. 134–135.

the Republic rejected those decisions of the Council of Trent that undermined or threatened civil authority.³⁶

On 16 February 1564, Pius IV issued a papal brief annulling the privileges awarded to Venetian Greeks by previous popes. His aim was to put all Greek communities, churches, and monasteries throughout Italy under the jurisdiction of Latin bishops.³⁷ Rome also demanded Venice allow the Jesuits to apply the Counter Reformation on the territories of the *Stato da Mar*.³⁸ The Republic refused to sanction the papal brief, saying it threatened civic tranquillity. It also denied the Jesuits' access to its territories, arguing that this would create social and political disturbances which the state had neither the resources nor the stomach to quell. This firm stand against papal demands was based on the state's long-held position of never allowing any other power — religious or secular — to dictate policy over its internal affairs. For their part, the Greeks probably understood that in the long run, the state was their ally and protector. It sheltered them from the worst excesses of the Counter Reformation, and it guaranteed their independence from Constantinople. It would act again and again, as it had in the past, as their benefactor and patron. It is hardly surprising then that it was with the encouragement and blessing of the state, and a little clever manipulation, that the Greeks got their very own metropolitan.

The Metropolitan of Filadelfia, 1572–1600

In 1572 Gabriel Sevro, a young Cretan monk (*geromonaco*), arrived in Venice as one of the candidates for chaplaincy of San Giorgio dei Greci. He lost the election of 29 June 1572 but was successful the following year (29 June 1573). He remained in Venice for another year before returning to Crete. Four years later, Sevro was enthroned as the metropolitan (archbishop) of Filadelfia with spiritual authority over Venetian Greeks. Up to that point, neither the state nor the Greeks had considered the instalment of a Greek rite bishop, but between 1572 and 1577 a series of events took place that changed the situation, enabling Sevro to become the Greek metropolitan in Venice, a position, it must be said, he neither sought nor desired.³⁹

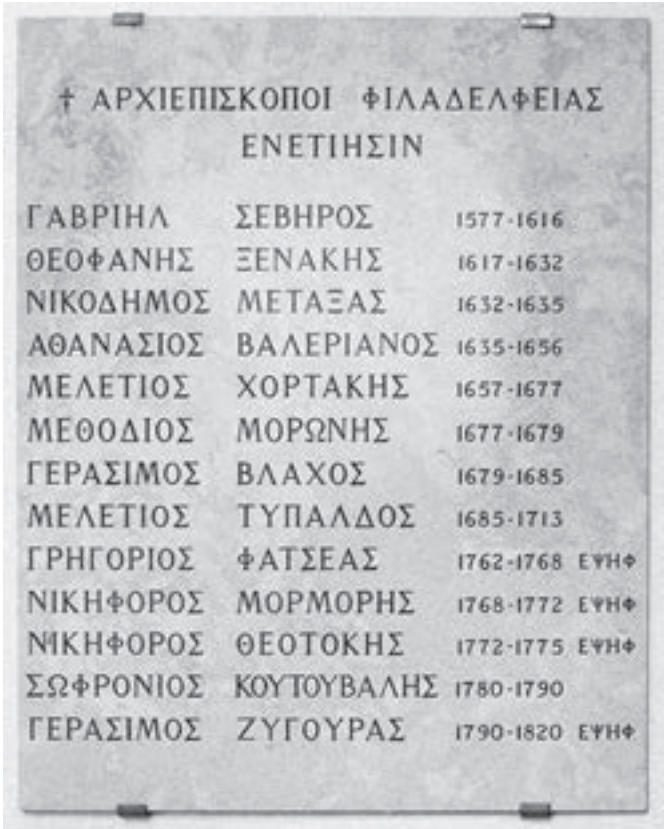
³⁶ Fedalto, 'La comunità greca la chiesa di Venezia, la chiesa di Roma', pp. 97–98.

³⁷ Fedalto, *Ricerche storiche sulla posizione giuridica ed ecclesiastica dei greci a Venezia*, pp. 86–93 and 132–133; Porfyriou, 'La diaspora greca in Italia', pp. 139, 167; Tsirpanlis, 'La posizione della comunità greco-ortodossa', p. 139.

³⁸ Zanardi, 'I *domicilia* o centri operativi della Compagnia di Gesù'.

³⁹ A metropolitan is like an archbishop, but the latter is the more important of the

Figure 4.2:
The Metropolitans
of Philadelphia
1577–1820.
Courtyard, San
Giorgio dei Greci.
Photo courtesy of
John Burke.



† ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΙ ΦΙΛΑΔΕΛΦΕΙΑΣ ΕΝΕΤΙΗΣΙΝ		
ΓΑΒΡΙΗΛ	ΣΕΒΗΡΟΣ	1577-1616
ΘΕΟΦΑΝΗΣ	ΞΕΝΑΚΗΣ	1617-1632
ΝΙΚΟΔΗΜΟΣ	ΜΕΤΑΞΑΣ	1632-1635
ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΟΣ	ΒΑΛΕΡΙΑΝΟΣ	1635-1656
ΜΕΛΕΤΙΟΣ	ΧΟΡΤΑΚΗΣ	1657-1677
ΜΕΘΟΔΙΟΣ	ΜΟΡΩΝΗΣ	1677-1679
ΓΕΡΑΣΙΜΟΣ	ΒΛΑΧΟΣ	1679-1685
ΜΕΛΕΤΙΟΣ	ΤΥΠΑΛΔΟΣ	1685-1713
ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙΟΣ	ΦΑΤΣΕΑΣ	1762-1768 ΕΥΗΦ
ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΣ	ΜΟΡΜΟΡΗΣ	1768-1772 ΕΥΗΦ
ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΣ	ΘΕΟΤΟΚΗΣ	1772-1775 ΕΥΗΦ
ΣΩΦΡΟΝΙΟΣ	ΚΟΥΤΟΥΒΑΛΗΣ	1780-1790
ΓΕΡΑΣΙΜΟΣ	ΖΥΓΟΥΡΑΣ	1790-1820 ΕΥΗΦ

Initially Seviro was drawn to the Venice chaplaincy because he believed it would allow him to look after himself, his unmarried sisters, and his widowed mother in Crete. Otherwise, it was not an attractive or particularly rewarding position, nor did it satisfy his own ambitions or those of his patron, Leonino Servo. Servo was a wealthy Cretan merchant who doubled as an agent for the Republic in his travels through the Ottoman Empire, particularly in Constantinople where he was based.⁴⁰ He dreamt of establishing a synod

two. In the Eastern rite, a metropolitan corresponds to a diocesan bishop in the West. The Metropolitan of Filadelfia was originally the head of the Greek church in Venice and of Eastern rite followers in the Venetian territories of Dalmatia. Today, it is the title of the spiritual leader of the Greek Orthodox Church in Italy, and Venice remains the seat of the Metropolitan of Filadelfia: Birtachas, ‘Un “secondo” vescovo a Venezia’. Birtachas presents an overview of the history of the See of Filadelfia from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.

⁴⁰ Birtachas, ‘Un “secondo” vescovo a Venezia’, p. 105.

on Crete made up of five Greek rite prelates, that is, four bishops and one archbishop. Sevro was his preferred candidate for the archbishop's position. Servo had already prepared the way by negotiating with Ecumenical Patriarch Geremia II to confer on Sevro the position of Metropolitan of Filadelfia, an episcopal seat in Asia Minor. In 1576 Sevro went to Constantinople for his consecration and then immediately left for Crete where he hoped to be named to the Servo-backed synod. Nothing came of it however, because Venetian authorities opposed the installation of Greek rite bishops on Crete. They believed, based on past experience, that such a move would undermine the position of the religious head of the island, the Latin bishop of Candia, and that ultimately this would upset the status quo.⁴¹

The island's *provveditor*, Giacomo Foscarini, also opposed the idea of a Greek rite bishop on Crete. He was well aware of the loyalty and devotion Cretans felt for their own priests, and such loyalties, particularly strong among the peasantry, were not to be encouraged. It was one thing for peasants to support their priests but quite another to have a Greek bishop commanding their loyalty as well as that of townspeople. Such a situation would only serve to weaken the fragile position of Latin prelates. In the end Foscarini took Sevro with him back to Venice. He persuaded the Council of Ten that Leonino Servo's plan was a very bad idea; as a result, the Council of Ten issued a decree in August 1577 unilaterally rejecting it.⁴² But in the meantime, it had to deal with a disillusioned Sevro, who now faced the prospect of moving to faraway Asia Minor. Ever the realists, Venetian authorities instead acknowledged his position and approved his appointment as head of the Greek church in Venice. Thus the position of Greek Metropolitan of Venice was established, to a small extent, through the intervention of the state. Sevro served from 1577 until his death in 1616, but he never lost his desire to return to Crete as its bishop.

The decision to approve Sevro's appointment assumes even greater significance when placed within a broader historical context and the recurring themes that influenced the state's attitudes towards the Greeks. As noted earlier, the last third of the sixteenth century was a difficult time for the Republic. It was

⁴¹ Cretans wishing to become priests could not be ordained on the island unless they were Latin rite priests. Since the majority of Cretan priests were not Latin rite, they either went to territories where Greek bishops were allowed (Monemvasia was the closest) or to Constantinople.

⁴² This is a truncated account of the Servo plan. For the details, including a discussion of the ecclesiastical situation in Crete regarding the Greek and Latin churches, see Birtachas, 'Un "secondo" vescovo a Venezia', pp. 103–10.

a time to be reaching out to friends and supporters, not creating new enemies. Marginalizing Seviro, which in effect meant ignoring a high church official who had a powerful and useful patron, would have resulted in the alienation of her Greek subjects. This was particularly true of Cretans, who were prone to react with hostility to any kind of Venetian overreach. It was something no sensible state, and the Venetians had a very sensible streak, could afford. The state needed the full support of the the people of Crete. In 1571 the Ottomans captured Cyprus, and it was feared Crete would be next. The euphoria over the Christian victory at Lepanto had been short lived; in fact, the Ottomans rebuilt their fleet within a year of that debacle. The question of religious tolerance was particularly vexing for the Venetians, and they were wary of upsetting their non-Latin subjects by unleashing the Counter Reformation. They knew the Ottomans showed greater tolerance and respect for religious diversity; one of the first things they did when they took over the Republic's Greek territories was to restore the authority of the Greek church. This was a powerful act in itself and a worrying one for Venetian imperial authorities, particularly those on Crete, who repeatedly questioned the loyalty of their overwhelmingly Greek rite subjects.

The Roman church did not see things in the same way as the Venetians. It continued to demand the full enforcement of the Counter Reformation in Venice and its possessions. To illustrate how serious Rome was about this, it established its own offices to encourage and secure the conversion of Greek rite Christians to the Latin church via the Congregation for the Reform of Greeks (1573), the establishment of the Greek College of Rome (1576), and by funding the publication of books hostile to the Greek rite. The Venetians were concerned that such policies would eventually spell trouble in the territories and in Venice. They were also afraid that refusing to obey Rome's dictates could expose Eastern Christians to the taint of Protestantism. The fear of creeping Protestantism in the East was further enflamed by the news that contacts had been made between Ecumenical Patriarch Geremia II and Protestant theologians from Tübingen. In the end Rome and Venice need not have worried, as the ecumenical patriarch found enough grounds on which to differ from Tübingen, but this was not immediately evident.

It was against this background that the state encouraged Seviro to accept its support. They made him an offer he could not refuse. As metropolitan, he would not only be responsible for the day-to-day supervision and spiritual well-being of Venetian Greeks but also of Ionian Islanders and Eastern rite Dalmatians. He would have regular contact with Venetian religious and political figures. The post certainly relieved most of his financial worries. Upon his acceptance,

Seviro received fifty *cecchini* as a one-off payment, another hundred *cecchini* for each of his sisters, and a stipend from the state of six *cecchini* per month. The Greek *scuola* provided him, and all future metropolitans, with lodgings and a regular income of twelve ducats a month. The *Banca* promised to help him carry out his functions and duties.⁴³ His new home was located in the parish of Sant' Antonin, where all Greek religious lived. In the census of 1592, Seviro's household numbered six people: himself, two priests named Dionisio and Theochari, the monks Erasmo and Nicodemo, and a novice named Anzolo.⁴⁴

In the thirty-nine years he held the position, Seviro changed the nature of the relationship between the Greek community and the state, ushering in a period of peaceful coexistence that lasted till the fall of the Republic in 1797. He supported the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, even though many Greeks were opposed to it. Initially the state did not want to impose the calendar change on the Greek community without the consent of the ecumenical patriarch, out of respect for Greek traditions and an unwillingness to press its authority on the community. But Seviro had his own ideas and worked with Latin prelates to implement the new calendar not only in Venice but throughout his jurisdiction. He had regular contact with the head inquisitor of Venice, co-operated with the *Savio all' Eresia* and the representative of the Holy Office, and aligned himself with the *giovane*, the young patricians in government who opposed the Jesuits and the Counter Reformation. During the Interdict of 1606, he supported Paolo Sarpi, the theologian and champion of the state, over the attempts of Pope Paul V to impose his authority on local clergy. Seviro had an acute sense of knowing which way the political wind was blowing and aligned himself and his church accordingly. He was genuinely committed to dialogue between the Greek and Latin churches and to the preservation of Greek privileges. He also wanted to protect his church from the Jesuits, because pressure from Rome had forced the Venetian government to open Greek colleges, based on the Roman model, in Padua and Venice. At the same time, the state did not stand in Seviro's way when he asked for and received permission to open a Greek school (1593) and a convent (1601) near San Giorgio dei Greci.

Unfortunately for Seviro, his close involvement with Latin and Venetian authorities earned him the displeasure of Ecumenical Patriarch Geremia II,

⁴³ Manoussacas, 'La comunità greca e gli Arcivescovi di Filadelfia', pp. 66 and 77.

⁴⁴ ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 1, Sant'Antonin, unfoliated. At the time of the census there were twenty-three Greek religious in this parish: one archbishop (Seviro), five priests with their families and/or tenants, eleven nuns, one abbess, one abbot, and four monks. All Greek religious lived in Sant' Antonin parish.

who felt the metropolitan was exceeding his authority. In 1579 Geremia sent out a *sigillo* (the patriarchal version of a chrysobull) proclaiming the Greek church in Venice was under the authority of Constantinople like the other Eastern churches and that it enjoyed freedom and independence according to the ancient privileges of all churches.⁴⁵ The *sigillo* curtailed certain powers the ecumenical patriarch felt the metropolitan had exceeded. Geremia also insisted Seviro return to his seat in Asia Minor, but Seviro refused to do so. At that point the *Banca* stepped in and wrote to Geremia that it rejected the ecumenical patriarch's criticisms and demands and affirmed the community's support for its metropolitan: 'we see how he lives honourably and well: we respect him and we love him.'⁴⁶ The defining moment in the dispute came in September 1583 when *scuola* members voted in favour of a motion to reject the authority of the ecumenical patriarch at Constantinople over San Giorgio dei Greci. Subsequently *scuola* officers sent a letter to Geremia II expressing the community's loyalty and respect for him but saying that their community could not accept his demands. Their justification for retaining the status quo was based on the fact that the Greek church had been established by the authority of the state (specifically concessions awarded by the Council of Ten) and the papacy, not the ecumenical patriarch.⁴⁷ Following this, the state moved to establish the permanency of the metropolitan's seat in Venice. Seviro's successors were elected by the general membership of the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci, and that decision was then ratified by the Venetian Senate. Afterwards, the new bishop sailed to Constantinople for his consecration because without patriarchal licence (*ekdosis*) the election was not legal. In the end the state and the religious authorities in Constantinople, Rome, and Venice found common ground, and the Greek church remained independent from outside interference.

Seviro faced many personal problems during his tenure. He continued to have money difficulties and borrowed heavily and frequently from friends and associates. He also had enemies who wanted to destroy him. In 1588 he was arrested by the Inquisition and held for five months while the court examined accusations, ultimately proven false, that he had encouraged rebellion on

⁴⁵ 'stauropegion patriarchale et come gli altri [...] haver la libertà et la insogiogabilità secondo gli antichi privilegi': Fedalto, 'La comunità greca, la chiesa di Venezia, la chiesa di Roma', p. 99.

⁴⁶ Andronico Cuvli, at the time chair of the *Banca*, wrote the letter on behalf of the community: Crusius, *Turcograecia*, VIII, 525–26.

⁴⁷ Tsirpanlis, 'La posizione della comunità greco-ortodossa', p. 142.

Crete. His accusers claimed he was in contact with the Ottomans because he wished to bring Crete under their control; in return the Ottomans had agreed to appoint him archbishop of the island. The accusation was put about by a certain Serafim, who said he was a monk but was not: 'con artist' describes him more accurately. While in Venice Serafim claimed to be raising money for a charity for which, as it turned out, he was the sole beneficiary. Seviro and one of his associates, a Cretan monk named Nathaniel, found him out and put an end to the ruse. But before the truth came out, in October 1588 the Inquisition arrested Seviro because some letters from Constantinople and Crete turned up accusing him of treachery. The source of these new accusations was said to have been Serafim.

The Inquisitors questioned Seviro closely. They asked him about his recent trip to Crete; he was not long back from visiting the island, and the Inquisitors wanted to know if he had been canvassing support among the islanders for a Greek archbishop. They questioned him closely about the clothes he wore. Seviro told the court he wore nothing to indicate his status, and in fact dressed in the garb of a monk as he had promised the Signoria he would. Did he say mass in any of the island's major cities? No, he did not.⁴⁸ In the end Seviro and Nathaniel were exonerated. This unfortunate episode soured relations between the Greeks and the state for some time. One can argue that the state and the Inquisition were only doing their duty in investigating the possibility of treason and heresy. Even if it were so, they certainly used heavy-handed methods to get to the truth. If nothing else, the incident showed the Venetians at their paranoid worst.

Seviro died on 31 October 1616 at Lesina (now Hvar), an island off the Dalmatian coast. He had been visiting Eastern rite communities in Dalmatia, and at Zara he began writing his will, which he finished dictating in Lesina.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Inquisitor: 'Quando vostra santità fu in Candia che habiti vesti ella?'

Seviro: '[...] non ho portato pastoral ne altro segno archiepiscopal ne ancora ho detto messa ne in Rettimo ne in alcun luoco dell' isola [...].'

Inquisitor: 'Vostra santità vesti questi habiti privati come la dice et non archiepiscopali ne volse dir messa con tutto che come la dice ne fusse ricercata fecela questo per le elettion personal o perchè havesse qualche prohibition intorno à cio?'

Seviro: 'Perchè promissi ciò à sua Signoria di andar come caloiero.'

The affair and the subsequent court proceedings are in Maltezou, 'Gavriil Seviros Imprigionato dai Veneziani'.

⁴⁹ There are three wills. The original was written by Seviro in Greek; the second is a copy

In the will he listed people to whom he owed money and instructed his executors to clear his debts. This was easier said than done because, as it turned out, the executors of his will, Giulio Soderini, Zuane Gribetto, and Nicolò Mormori, discovered that he owed money to many more people than those he listed in the will. The executors had considerable difficulty raising the money to satisfy creditors and were forced to sell off most of the archbishop's household items and his library. In the end, and despite the debts and other nuisances, Gabriel Sevro proved to be the best person to lead the Greeks. He was a devoted leader of the community and oversaw its incorporation into Venetian society. He cooperated with the authorities and maintained a dialogue between the Greek and Latin churches. He succeeded in raising the community's standing. He never returned to his beloved Crete as a monk or a priest, let alone as its archbishop, but during his time in Venice he set very high standards for his successors to follow.

* * *

By the end of the sixteenth century, San Giorgio dei Greci was an established presence in Venice. Its members elected their priests and metropolitans; the former were approved by the Venetian patriarch and the latter by the ecumenical patriarch. San Giorgio was organized like all the other churches with a few exceptions; for example, it could not register births, deaths, and marriages because it was not a parish church. In 1599, however, it won the right to register marriages and baptisms, but all other records remained the responsibility of Latin parishes. For its part the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci remained the community's record keeper and official voice. It serviced the building fund and kept account books, records of bequests, funeral expenses and burials, paid the salaries of priests and the metropolitan, and was responsible for church maintenance.

of the original but written in Greek using the Latin alphabet because the notary, Giacomo Leporino, did not know Greek. The will was dictated to Leporino by a Greek monk, Iosef Kolliva, who also helped him with the spelling. The third will is a copy of the second, scribe unknown, with slight variations. It too is in Greek. Sevro's body was returned to Venice twenty months after his death and reburied in San Giorgio dei Greci. Stergellis, 'The Will of Gavriil Sevro'. Sevro's death notice is in the Sant' Antonin parish death registry. It reads: 'Adi 18 zugno 1618. Monsignor Gabriel Svirò [Sevro], arcivescovo di Filadelfia, de anni 75, morto già mesi 20 a Lessina et condoto il suo cadavere in questa citade' (On the 18 June 1618. Monsignor Gabriel Svirò, archbishop of Filadelfia, aged 75, died 20 months ago at Lessina and his body was brought to this city'): *Gli atti di morte dei Greci*, ed. by Malteizou and Ploumidis, p. 63.

In the end, the patron of the Greek church, the body that protected its status and its independence from successive popes and patriarchs (of Venetian and ecumenical variety), the Jesuits, and the Counter Reformation was the Venetian state. Without its support, the Greeks would have had great difficulty achieving their goals. The Republic recognized the important contribution of its Greek population to its well-being, and the Greeks acknowledged this. In the 1583 letter to the ecumenical patriarch asking him to stay out of their affairs, Greek community leaders expressed the view that the state was the final arbiter in their disputes and explained how they gave of themselves to serve it as workers and fighters. The words they used and the actions they described showed that Greeks saw Venice as their place too.

VENETIAN GREEKS?

When they immigrated, Greeks brought their history, customs, habits, and rituals with them to their new home and then created institutions that reflected these. But while San Nicolò and San Giorgio dei Greci affirmed the community's permanency and physical presence, they were not the only manifestations of what it meant to be a Greek in Venice. Like other immigrant communities, the Greek one was neither stagnant nor inward looking; on the contrary, it was made up of a complex structure of smaller communities united by language, rite, and political heritage. It renewed itself with the arrival of compatriots, and it extended itself through its relationships with local people and institutions. Greeks were colleagues, neighbours, and friends. They sponsored chapels, hospitals, artists, and religious houses. They blended Venetian customs into their own. The aim here is to examine how they did this.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first looks at what Greeks wanted from the state as expressed in their petitions (*suppliche*) and the gifts and honours (*gratie*) the state granted them in return. The second focuses on the retention of Greek customs and the adoption of local traditions and habits.

A Generous State?

The Venetian imperial system required an obliging local workforce to fill positions in Venice's land and sea territories. The income from many of these offices was not overly generous, reflecting the low status of many of the positions: policing and guard duties, porters and gatekeepers, servants, clerks, attendants, and messengers (*fante*).¹ More lucrative positions were available for those

¹ The term *fante* had several meanings: servant, attendant, apprentice, messenger, clerk,

higher up the social scale. In short, the state handed out pensions, stipends, licences, and offices in Venice and abroad. Like others, Greeks regularly asked for and received one or more of these.

The award system was not class-based, so everyone — patricians, *popolani*, rich, and poor — made use of it. It was open to Venetians, subject people, and foreigners; that is, anyone living in Venice or its territories. For example, in September 1572 five Turkish merchants asked for assistance because they found themselves in difficult straits. They were in Venice, separated from their employer (the Sultan's *dragomano*), who was in Verona. Their goods had been sequestered during the Lepanto war and had not yet been returned to them. The five faced the prospect of a cold winter with little cash. In their petition they requested warm clothing and blankets to tide them over the winter, or at least until officials released their merchandise and allowed them to return to their homes.² The petitioning process could be quick, but was usually lengthy, with the longest delays occurring when requests reached the final stage in the Senate. The group of Turkish merchants had been waiting nearly two years for their goods to be returned. Similarly, in a petition lodged in June 1575, Costantino Maurici complained that he was still waiting for compensation for the tools he lost when he helped put out the fire that engulfed the Ducal Palace in 1574 and, as he pointed out, it had been over a year since he had submitted his request.³

Despite the slow delivery of rewards, the state did what it could to look after public welfare. It recognized the efforts of the people who served as soldiers, sailors, castellans, and fire-fighters, to name a few occupations. In the interests of law and order, and to keep large numbers of people gainfully employed so they did not turn to crime, the state meted out work to the unemployed and dowry money to orphaned girls. Working men and women were assigned lowly paid positions in magistracies in the city or one of its dependencies. Families with young, single, or orphaned women asked for small dowry allowances to allow the women to enter into a good marriage or to join a convent, and in this way remove the temptation or need to prostitute themselves. The money to

bailiff, usher, and people who had finished their training and were now working in their own right. Most *fante* awards required recipients to carry out menial tasks.

² ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 5, fol. 86r–v, 25 September 1572. On the same day, another group of Turkish merchants, also in Venice, submitted a similar request for help. Like their compatriots, their goods had been sequestered: ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 5, fol. 87r, 25 September 1572.

³ ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 6, fol. 13r, 5 June 1575.

finance these awards came from the treasuries of magistracies in Venice and its subject cities and territories.

Petitions

Petitions (*suppliche*) are a rich source of information.⁴ Greeks participated in petition writing with the same enthusiasm as Venetians and other subject people. Because many supplicants prefaced their requests with descriptions of their years of Venetian service, petitions often embellished accounts of the ties between the individual and the state. On a more practical level, they contain information about occupations and working conditions; hardships suffered, like enslavement and poverty; and family histories. They illustrate the extent of the Republic's dependence on colonial people to perform important work on land and sea, and reinforce the links between the individual and the state. Whether they were protesting their innocence for some real or imagined crime, requesting financial assistance or a position in the Arsenal, petitions and the decisions arising from them provide insights into the issues that concerned people as they went about their daily lives. More importantly, they reflect a particularly exaggerated view of the state, that it was the institution to which individuals turned to for justice, arbitration, employment and relief.⁵

Usage and style were so important that much of the language of petitions was taken from set phrases. Exaggeration was the rule rather than the exception. This is why very few people, including the well educated and well connected, composed petitions themselves. Instead petitioners hired scribes who knew which phrases to use, did not make grammatical errors, and did not use dialect or informal speech. This formulaic style did not necessarily mean that feelings expressed were empty phrases or merely a means to an end. Language

⁴ Petitions were submitted to the College, where they were read and then approved or rejected. If approved, they were sent to the relevant magistracy for further consideration. The archival series of petitions (*filze*) begins in 1563 and continues to the end of the Republic, although some pre-1563 petitions and decisions can be found in Senate *filze*. Petitioners were individuals: occupational, ethnic, or religious groups of people; *scuole*; religious houses; and even cities and towns. On guild petitions, see Mackenney, *Tradesmen and Traders*, pp. 224–25 and 228–31. Davis described the petition writing process and the distribution of gifts in great detail: Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal*, pp. 183–97.

⁵ Petitions contain valuable information about individuals and their families; however, they need to be read critically. The process of separating exaggeration from fact and arriving at a more realistic view of the petitioner and her/his circumstances was not an easy one. An excellent guide on reading and interpreting these accounts is in Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*.

was important: it reinforced the supplicant's devotion to her/his family through the recollection of its history, and it expressed love for the *patria* and the blessings of living under Venetian rule. Scribes interspersed petitions with terms such as *loyalty*, *bravery*, *sacrifice*, and *service*, as if somehow it was necessary to remind the reader again and again of the historical links between the supplicant and the state. This reliance on repetition, memory, and connection sometimes produced the desired effects. To what extent, then, were such sentiments heartfelt, and to what extent were they part of the process of petition writing? The flowery language was certainly part of the process. The recollection of the years of service established the supplicant's credentials and provided the justification for the request. It is easy to dismiss this style of writing as meaningless, but many people relied on the state to deliver, just as that state regularly called on its people to do the same. The Myth of Venice reinforced the notion of a caring state. It was therefore in supplicants' interests to use Myth to their advantage, and in the state's interests to reinforce it through positive action and favourable results. The College, where petitions were read first, had to decide whether or not they deserved further attention. Not surprisingly, only a small number actually moved to the next stage, and even fewer got through to the end. The College rejected weak arguments, poorly written submissions, lies, and over-exaggeration. Social status mattered too: upper class supplicants had the highest success rate.⁶

Greeks had been asking the state for favours even before they moved to Venice. They sought satisfaction through a system they knew and that knew them. They recalled in detail their service and family histories because they knew these mattered. The majority of requests were concerned with personal, not corporate, issues. Not surprisingly, most of these were work related: pensions or positions in Venice or one of its territories; compensation for loss, theft, or accident; requests for licences to sell, buy, and trade; for justice to be done; and citizenship *de intus et extra*. Greek demands then were similar to those made by Venetians and foreigners. The overriding concern was access to an award that provided employment and a good income or failing that, a small pension.

⁶ In the first half of the seventeenth century less than half (40 per cent) of *arsenalotti* petitions were granted; however, success rates increased higher up the socio-economic scale one. 'Overall, around 40 per cent of all Arsenal petitioners actually saw their *suppliche* granted by an award (*gratia*) of the Senate. Different sorts of petitioners had different expectations of success, however, ranging from only around 30 per cent for petitions awarded to rank and file *arsenalotti*, to 40 per cent for outsiders seeking to enrol, to nearly 50 per cent for worker managers of all types, to an almost 80 per cent success rate for the *suppliche* of the Admiral and four principal foremen': Davis, *Shipbuilders of the Venetian Arsenal*, p. 189.

Greek petitioners mainly came from the maritime and artisan classes. Between 1563 and 1600 ninety-two Greeks submitted 110 petitions.⁷ The majority of these were refugees rather than voluntary immigrants, and the highest proportion came from Napoli di Romania and Monemvasia. Only fifteen of the ninety-two supplicants were women. This pattern repeated itself among other ethnic groups as well as Venetians. Why did so few women ask for favours? A few already had access to privileges and awards through their fathers, brothers, and husbands, so they did not need to seek favours in their own right. There was also the cultural expectation that women would be looked after by other family members, even though the census of 1592–94 showed that many, many women supported themselves and lived alone. Some immigrant women may have believed they did not have strong claims because, unlike men, they did not have work ties to the Republic. In fact, the few women who submitted petitions usually related the stories of their men, and then, almost as an afterthought, added their own. Greek women might also have been less inclined to petition because many were illiterate, or they did not speak Italian, or they did not know anyone who could compose a petition for them. Even women of means and know-how often left it to their men to ask for favours on their behalf.

Women whose male relations held important positions or had a history of Venetian service had a better chance of securing income-bearing awards and offices than women with few or no links to the Republic. Speranza Paleologo grew up in Cyprus where her father, brothers, and husband served as *capi dei stratioti*. When Nicosia fell (1570), she lost everything: home, properties, and her father and two brothers (her husband had died several years earlier). Ottoman soldiers stormed her house and raped all the women. Speranza, her two sons, and a daughter were enslaved, and the family was separated. Her sons and her surviving brother were taken to Constantinople, and Speranza and her daughter to the island of Chios. Eventually a good Christian ransomed mother and daughter, and they immediately sailed for Venice. Once they were settled, Speranza put in a claim for a pension based on her late father's long years of service. She also asked for a new office in the name of one of her sons; this would give her the extra income she needed to buy both boys' freedom. Her claim was quickly approved.⁸ Speranza was fortunate because she came from a

⁷ All the petitions came from Greeks living in Venice. Nine people were repeat petitioners, that is, they submitted requests two or more times.

⁸ Speranza Paleologo's petition is in ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 5, fol. 288r, 21

well-known family that had already served Venice for over a hundred years, and many of its men were still in Venetian service. Her brother won his freedom by the mid-1570s, and in 1577 he was one of the *capi dei stratioti* stationed on Cephalonia. Her sons' fate is unknown; if they were eventually freed, they too would have been assured of military commissions and sent to one of the remaining sea colonies.

The discrepancy between men and women supplicants extended to the granting of awards. Senate records show that between 1546 and 1548 seventy-three people from Napoli di Romania and Monemvasia received compensation for the loss of properties, monies, and livelihoods following the Ottoman conquest of those cities. Only twenty-five awards (34 per cent) went to women, even though the gender balance between male and female supplicants was fairly even.⁹ On a broader scale (and excluding the 1546–48 gifts), in a random selection of 140 people receiving awards between 1520 and 1600, only twenty-seven (19 per cent) were women, and all but six of these were married or widowed. These low numbers did not mean there were fewer women in need. If nothing else, the figures indicate a lack of confidence in asserting claims, an unfamiliarity with the petitioning process, and a social and cultural world that defined all women through their men.

Women's petitions support these conclusions. When Zuana Fontana asked for assistance, she listed her personal losses in support of her claims and then described her husband's achievements and his years of service to the Republic. The family — Nicolò, Zuana, and their three children — left their native Napoli di Romania in 1541. Nicolò faithfully served in the company of the *capo dei stratioti* Francesco de Nassin and fought in Candia and elsewhere for over forty years. Zuana said that his death left the family without any means of support. She asked that a portion of Nicolò's salary be transferred to her to provide for the family, which at the time of the petition (December 1568) had grown to eight people:

October 1574. The family history and its fate during the battle for Nicosia was recounted by her surviving brother, Demetri. *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce*, ed. by Sathas, v, 211–13.

⁹ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 29, fols 1r–v, 41v–42r, 105v–106r, 139v–140r, 146r–147v, 155r, 167r–168r, 177v–180v. More Naupliots and Monemvasians received awards than any other subject people. In many cases the awards were continuously renewed throughout the century, to the point where they became family sinecures.

My husband died leaving me the poor supplicant his wife with the burden of a large family of three children, that is one boy and two girls and the wife, and children, of my son in the greatest calamity and poverty [...] I [wish] to have a favour [...] of three ducats a month from the provision that the aforesaid my late husband had.¹⁰

The petition did not go into the details of Nicolò's career, focusing instead on Fontana's misfortunes; in fact, hers was one of the few petitions that told more of the woman's story than the man's. The loss of her homeland had a serious impact on Zuana in a very personal way too because when she fled, she had to abandon her dowry, which was mainly in real estate: 'I left in Napoli [...] houses and land estimated at 330 ducats, a good portion which was part of my dowry (and) these aforementioned possessions sustained all of our family.'¹¹

The conditions that led Zuana to ask for help highlight the precarious position of refugee women. When they fled their homes, refugee women lost the rights to their properties, a financial disaster no matter how meagre the size of the property or the income it generated. While refugee men also lost possessions, the world of commerce, trades, and seafaring beckoned. Women had fewer job opportunities, and regardless, they received lower wages. Simply put, women did not have the same choices as men. Dislocation, the loss of a good part of their earnings, children to care for, widowhood, and little or no family for support left many destitute. They received some relief from the Greek *scuola* and local civic and religious charities, but a regular income provided better, long-term security. Another Naupliot, Marina Petrucina, also lost everything when she and her family went to Venice. In 1541 the Senate awarded her an expectancy of six ducats a year. Forty years later, she petitioned again, this time asking to have the expectancy increased to five ducats a month. She also asked that the gift remain in the family, that it pass to her son after her death. She justified her request on precedence and the state's tradition of generosity to Naupliot families.¹² The Petrucina and Fontana petitions reinforced the

¹⁰ ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 3, fol. 257r, 19 December 1568: '[voglio] haver una gratia [...] di ducati tre al mese della provisone che haveva il preditto q. mio marito [...]'. At the time of his death, Nicolò was earning three ducats a month.

¹¹ ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 3, fol. 257r, 19 December 1568. 'Lascio a Napoli tante case et terreni che [...] stimati ducati 330 buona parte de' quali erano la dote mia, sopraditta quali beni sostentavano tutta la nostra fameglia.'

¹² ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 7, fol. 260r, 23 May 1584. 'Suplico che la si degni conciedermi un'espettativa de ducati 5 in circa al mese [...] et sia mesa in nomine di detto mio figliuolo doppo la mia morte [...] suplicar a piedi Suoi, et conseguir qualche officio, comme hanno fatto tutti gl' altri Napolitani.'

importance of the dowry for women's financial security: in many instances, it was the difference between a life of poverty and one of survival. Deprived of this vital source, it is not surprising that women turned to the state for support. All female petitions dealt with the same issues: the need for income-generating offices and the right to pass these on to their children. In every petition, the women asked a favour for themselves and their families; no female supplicant asked something for herself alone.

Men's petitions were different. They covered a broader range of issues: pay rises, pensions, employment, compensation, justice (no Greek woman claimed justice denied), and licences to trade or to practise a craft. Once again, money matters, usually the absence of an adequate income, were uppermost in people's minds. Several men appealed for pardons for crimes committed, or the restitution of their rights after serving jail time, or for justice to prevail. In July 1564 Vincenzo Maniera da Cipro submitted a petition on behalf of his brother Hieronymo. Hieronymo had been convicted of murder and subsequently exiled to Cyprus. Vincenzo asked for the conviction be overturned on the grounds that Hieronymo's two accomplices had been recently acquitted. The shipwright Nicolò di Demetri Grando claimed he was falsely accused of abandoning his post at the Arsenal. Grando explained that he was late returning to his post because he was shipwrecked near Naples and eventually, '[...] naked and bare-foot came to Venice, my homeland'. This took some time because he walked most of the way; once home, he immediately returned to the Arsenal but was accused of abandoning his post and dismissed. In his petition he asked to be reinstated. Grando's account said nothing about the fate of the ship's officers or any of the other members of the crew or their fate. His petition did not get beyond the first reading.¹³

Petitions from men were almost always work-related. If they had a history with Venice, they said so. If they knew or had worked for important people, especially patricians and other elites, they said so. Often the employer or acquaintance spoke in the supplicant's favour. Zorzi de Candia, a caulker in a private shipyard, wanted a position in the Arsenal. His petition included testimonials from two captains and a shipowner, men who could attest to the quality of his workmanship.¹⁴ Vincenzo Argitti named three patrician commanders of the fleets he had served under, as well as the *provveditor* Contarini who had

¹³ ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 1, fol. 51r, 18 July 1564 (Vincenzo Maniera); ASV, *Collegio*, filza 9, fol. 10r, 12 April 1589 (Nicolò di Demetri Grando).

¹⁴ ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 6, fol. 221r, 4 January 1577.

freed him from an Ottoman galley. Vincenzo Livo da Corfu worked as a shipwright on a number of galleys, as had his father before him. He listed the seven patrician commanders he served under, the length of service with each, and gave the names of other important men who could testify in his favour: 'The Most Illustrious Ser General Donato and other diverse illustrious gentlemen who found themselves on these galleys (Livo served on) and set themselves to give witness (to his bravery and devotion).' For good measure, he then went on to list his late father's commanders.¹⁵

Like women, men also recalled their family histories and the years, even the generations of loyal service. If their petitions were rejected, they tried again. Interestingly, no Greek woman did this. There is no one explanation why it was so, but it is worth offering some possible reasons. They might have interpreted the rejection of their request as proof that their case was weak or lacked legitimacy. It could have simply been that they lacked confidence. With the exception of Speranza Paleologo and a handful of other noble or wealthy women, female supplicants tended to come mostly from the lower end of the socio-economic scale. They earned less than men, in which case the cost of using a scribe to prepare another petition may have been too costly. More importantly, however, women did not have the kind of employment networks that men did. Vincenzo Livo and Zorzi da Candia were not wealthy men, but they had served under or worked for noted patricians, artisans, and other men of means and influence. In short, other than the wives and daughters of *capi dei stratioti* and the old Moreote nobility, no other group of Greek women had the reputation, name recognition, or the significant networks that would have enabled them to call on those in high places to support a second, third, or fourth petition.

In general, working and lower middle-class Greeks of both sexes used the petitioning process to secure a position or get a small increase in wages, anything to make life a little better. The system, however, did not favour them.

Awards

State gifts became official when they were entered into the Senate calendar. The entries included the original request, the Senate decision, and the votes for and against the granting of the award. The decision also specified the conditions under which the gift was given, the petitioner's obligations, and the duration of the individual's or family's hold on it. This was usually for a number of years or,

¹⁵ ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 1, fol. 28r, 7 February 1563 (Argitti); ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 10, fol. 245r, 17 August 1598 (Vincenzo Livo).

in some cases, the lifetime of recipients. In many instances it was extended to children or other close family members. In this way, some awards became family sinecures, passing from one generation to the next. The Nassin and Cathario were not the only families to enjoy this privilege.¹⁶ The Eugenico family arrived in Venice in 1470, immediately after the fall of their native Negroponte. In 1472 Manoli Eugenico received a licence from the Salt Office allowing him to sell a fixed amount of salt. After his death in 1492, the licence went to his widow and two sons, Demetri and Zuane. After their mother's death, the brothers inherited her portion as well. In 1531 and again in 1535 the Senate reaffirmed Demetri's and Zuane's right to the licence and increased the quantity of salt they were allowed to trade. At some stage the licence became a hereditary pension, and in his 1549 will Demetri Eugenico left his share to his children, Nicoletto and Agnesina.¹⁷ Senate decisions often included conditions defining how monies were allocated as well. When the state provided for the widow and children of the late *capo dei stratioti* Manoli Clada, it specified how the money was to be distributed. The younger sons, Nicolò and Thodaro, each inherited half of their father's salary, while the girls, Marulla, Regina, and Anzola, received fifty-six ducats towards living expenses and their dowries. Clada's oldest son, Piero, was given his own company and a salary of thirty-two ducats a year. The widow received nothing, the assumption being that she would be looked after by her sons.¹⁸

No source better illustrates the state as benefactor than the awards handed out to men and women from Napoli di Romania and Monemvasia.¹⁹ These were not based on need: they were meant to compensate people for losses incurred when they abandoned the two cities in 1540. Starting in April 1541

¹⁶ See Chapter 3.

¹⁷ After their mother's death, the Senate affirmed Demetri and Zuane's right to her portion of the salt licence: ASV, *Senato da Terra*, reg. 28, fol. 140r–v, 4 June 1535. In his will, Demetri Eugenico stated his intention of leaving his portion to his children: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 125, 1 May 1549.

¹⁸ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 21, fol. 164r–v, 15 December 1529.

¹⁹ It is estimated that by early 1540 Napoli di Romania's population was between ten thousand and thirteen thousand people. A substantial proportion of them had moved into the city seeking refuge from the Veneto-Ottoman wars that had destroyed the countryside and its surrounding villages. Among them were large numbers of *stratioti* and their commanders. When the wars ended in 1541 (in Ottoman victory), a significant number of the population from Napoli di Romania and Monemvasia (which also fell to the Ottomans at the same time) left for Venice or Crete. I want to thank Diana Wright for information about the population of Napoli di Romania.

and continuing at least to the end of the sixteenth century, and in many instances beyond it, the Senate approved the distribution of thousands of ducats worth of pensions, positions in the civil and military service, licences, properties, and compensation to this select group of refugees and their descendants. Between February 1547 and June 1548 alone, over two hundred individuals received gifts.²⁰ To facilitate the task of resettling such a large number of people, on 4 March 1541 the Senate set up a five-member committee, the *Cinque Savii sopra Napolitani et Malvasiotti* (The Five Savii for Naupliots and Monemvasians) to supervise the arrival and settlement of refugees from the two cities.²¹ This committee was charged with recording people's names, places of origin, properties and other personal effects lost or destroyed, the precise location of homes, and any services individuals and/or families had rendered to Venice over time; in short, a type of Domesday book.²² Once they had this information the *Cinque Savii* began examining and reviewing every claim. A second agency exclusively dedicated to helping Naupliots and Monemvasians was located in the Rason Vecchie, a taxation and financial magistracy. This was called the *Officio delle Rason Vecchie sopra Napolitani et Malvasiotti*, and it was responsible for the computation of fees and monies paid to recipients.

Awards were not handed out lightly: claims were constantly examined and re-examined, and the *Cinque Savii* did not hesitate to rescind favours, as the following accounts show. On 11 February 1546 (mv) Petrisa Mascarogni, a widow from Napoli di Romania, was awarded a lifetime position in the Customs House (*Dogana da Mare*) for herself and her two children, Helena and Nicolò.²³ A year later, on 31 January 1547 (mv), the *Cinque Savii* amended the gift because it had learned that Petrisa's late husband Zuane had a son, Soteriano, by his first wife. Petrisa's petition said nothing about a stepson, and Soteriano did not contest his stepmother's claim because he was not in Venice when she submit-

²⁰ The gifts and their recipients are covered in *Senato da Mar* registers starting in June 1540 and continuing to the end of the century (registri 25–50).

²¹ The committee's terms of reference were set out by the Council of Ten: ASV, *Consiglio dei Dieci*, parti comuni, reg. 16, fol. 128r–v.

²² Kolyva and Moatsou, 'The Settlement of Naupliot and Monemvasian Refugees in Crete'. Kolyva and Moatsou followed Naupliot families that had first gone to Venice or one of the *Terraferma* cities before moving to Crete. The Cretan group included numerous *capi dei stratioti* clans and soldiers with their families.

²³ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 29, fol. 42r, 11 February 1546 (m.v.): 'A Petrisa Mascarogni sia concesso in vita soa, et di Nicolò et Helena sui figlioli, il luogo di capitaneo delle barche dalla Dohana da Mar vacato per la morte de Marco di Michiele.'

ted her petition. The *Cinque Savii* also learned that Helena was not Zuane's child but Petrisa's daughter by another man, and that she was born in Corfu, not in Napoli di Romania. Soteriano, however, had two Naupliot parents, and he was born in that city. Consequently, Soteriano replaced Helena as one of the three recipients of the gift. The committee chose to amend the gift in favour of Soteriano not only because he was his father's legitimate son, but also because Petrisa's claim was based on her late husband's long service on the galleys. This meant that any children born of Zuane were entitled to a share of the award. The issue of Helena's birthplace was significant, as was the fact that she was illegitimate and her father was not a Naupliot. This barred her from any gift. Interestingly, neither Petrisa nor Nicolò were denied their share of the award; instead, the *Cinque Savii* righted a wrong in favour of the late Zuane's first-born son.

The second case also involved a Naupliot. On 22 July 1542 Michali Psara won a position in the Customs House. The concession was in his name only, but upon his death it would pass to Alexandro, his son by his first wife Violante. In a notarial document dated 18 November 1547, his present wife, Marieta, alleged that Michali received his award by presenting an estimate of his wealth based on his own and Marieta's properties in Napoli di Romania. But since neither Michali nor Alexandro were present at the siege of the city, whereas she was, Marieta felt it only fair that Zorzi, hers and Michali's son, should be entitled to a portion of the concession after Michali's death. The situation must have created considerable tension in Venice's Naupliot community because two respected members, Canachi Cuvli and Marco Calauro, were asked to mediate and witness the division of the award into three parts: one-third to Marieta and one-third each to Zorzi and Alexandro.²⁴ Unfortunately, Psara's troubles did not end there. Five months later, this arrangement was overturned when the *Cinque Savii* learned that Alexandro was not Michali's legitimate son. The poor lad was now excluded from the award altogether, which went only to Marieta and Zorzi, but only after Michali's death.²⁵ The Mascarogni and Psara cases

²⁴ ASV, *Notarile Atti*, b. 10642, Agostino Pellestrina, fols 263v–264r, 18 November 1547: 'che tuta la utilità del officio sopraditto de fante alla Dohana, sia et essere debia divisa et partita in tre parte eguale una dele qual sia dela preditta dona Marieta, e l'altra del preditto Zorzi suo fiolo, et l'altra sia de lui Alexandro fiolo del ditto Michali, et dela q. dona Violante.'

²⁵ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 29, fols 167v–168r. On 20 April 1548 the Senate published the revocation of the original award and the terms of the new one: 'però sia preso, et dechiarito, che in luogo del detto Alessandro, il qual debba esser escluso, sia posto esso Zorzi, et detta Marieta sua madre, la quale etiam ha lassati beni a Napoli di Romania: nel qual officio la detta

illustrate the futility of lying, the fragile status of illegitimate children, but also the determination of the *Cinque Savii* to ensure everyone received what was rightly theirs.

This largess to Naupliots and Monemvasians was unique. The state was not as generous to Cypriots in 1571 or to earlier refugees from Modon, Coron, Negroponte, and Lepanto. Though the state did not say why this was so, there are some fairly obvious reasons for the difference. Not as many people went to Venice after the fall of Negroponte (1470) or Lepanto, Modon, and Coron (1499–1500). Most stayed in their homelands or moved to other Greek-speaking Venetian colonies. Cyprus was different, but not in the same way as Napoli di Romania. The majority of Cypriots lived in the countryside and worked the land. They had little attachment to the regime and even less to their home-grown and foreign feudal aristocracy. The Cyprus war was brutal and long, whereas Modon and Negroponte had been short wars and Coron, Napoli di Romania, and Monemvasia were controlled surrenders. More importantly, by the 1570s the Venetian economy was still strong but not as strong as it had been in the 1540s. Economic competition from Western and Northern European countries and the high cost of a century of continual war with the Ottomans had strained the public purse. But these military and financial issues were not the only reasons Cypriot refugees were treated differently. The 1540–41 war ended in a negotiated settlement: the Ottomans gave those people who did not wish to stay the time to gather up records, documents, and personal belongings before they left the two cities. Once in Venice, these people received compensation for personal losses. Cyprus was a long and costly war resulting in much destruction, high casualty rates, and total capitulation. The Ottomans enslaved thousands of men, women, and children. Venice feared Crete would be next and rushed to build up its naval fleet to defend the island. The state, the church, and private and public institutions and individuals stepped up to help families ransom loved ones. To expedite matters, the Senate on 10 March 1571 set aside a thousand ducats for the ransom of Cypriots enslaved after the fall of Nicosia.²⁶

madre et figliolo debbano succeder dopo la morte del prenominato Michali' (therefore be it resolved and declared that in place of the said Alessandro, who has been excluded [from the gift], is put this Zorzi, and the said Marieta his mother who had also lost goods in Napoli di Romania: said mother and son ought to inherit that office after the death of Micali).

²⁶ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 40, fol. 5r, 10 March 1571: 'Il Senato [...] a dare in elimosina ad essi miserabili schiavi sino alla summa de ducati mille delli danari della Signoria Nostra.' On the role of the Roman church in securing the freedom of those enslaved after the fall of Cyprus, see Rudt de Collenberg, 'Les litterae hortatoriae accordees par les papes.'

After 1541 the state chose to compensate Naupliots and Monemvasians, but after the Cyprus war it chose instead to liberate. It could not afford to do both.

Besides awards and compensation, the state also recognized good service and bravery. It reserved its highest honours for the men who served it well and had excelled in their profession. They received knighthoods and other privileges (*privilegi*) in recognition of deeds beneficial to the Republic. There were several ranks of privilege, ranging from lower honours (*equestris dignitatis* and *privilegium comitatum*) to the highest award, the knighthood of St Mark (*Cavaliere di San Marco*).²⁷ Among Greek recipients of this honour were *capi dei stratioti* and men of letters. Costantino Paleocapa, scholar and teacher of Greek, received his award in 1573 for his contribution to scholarship.²⁸ Like his father before him, Demetrio Paleologo di Teodoro became a Knight of St Mark (May 1554) in recognition of his years of service as a commander of *stratioti*.²⁹ Other military men received knighthoods following decisive victories in wartime. Zorzi Renessi was made a Knight of St Mark in 1571 for the bravery he had shown during the war against the Turks in Dalmatia. Three years later, Zuane Lascari received the lesser title of *equestris dignitatis* for bravery in that same on-going war. In 1593 Nicolò Lusi was commended for successfully expelling pirates that had been threatening Cephalonia.³⁰

Knighthood conferred certain privileges. At their investiture, the Knights of St Mark wore special ornamental clothing, gold belts or sashes and stockings, shoes, and spurs. They were allowed to carry swords and other weapons as a sign of their rank.³¹ The awards were only open to men, but women could

²⁷ For the Knights of St Mark, see Giustinian, *Historie Cronologiche*, I, 119, 122–23, 127; Bratti, 'I Cavalieri dell'Ordine di San Marco'; Casini, 'Gli ordini cavallereschi a Venezia fra quattro e seicento'. I want to thank Benjamin Arbel for information relating to this order of knights.

²⁸ ASV, *Senato*, Deliberazioni Privilegi, reg. III, fol. 18r–v, 10 December 1573. The Paleocapa were long-time residents of Venice. This Costantino Paleocapa was not the same man as the publisher, book collector, and teacher discussed in Chapter 3.

²⁹ ASV, *Cancellaria Inferiore*, Doge, Privilegi dei Cavalieri di San Marco, filza 174, fol. 5r, 21 May 1554.

³⁰ ASV, *Cancellaria Inferiore*, Doge, Privilegi dei Cavalieri di San Marco, filza 174, fol. 28r, 15 January 1571, and ASV, *Senato*, Deliberazioni Privilegi, reg. III, fol. 11r, 15 January 1571 (Zorzi Renessi); ASV, *Senato*, Deliberazioni Privilegi, reg. III, fols 18v–19r, 10 April 1574 (Zuane Lascari); ASV, *Senato*, Deliberazioni Privilegi, reg. III, fol. 61v, 12 September 1593 (Nicolò Lusi).

³¹ The decree bestowing knighthood on Zorzi Renessi reads: 'et gli havemo conceduto autorità di portare la cintura, la spada, l'armi, li spironi, le veste, et tutti gl'altri ornamenti militari, et di goder tutti li honori giuriditioni, libertà, et privilegii, che appartengono alla vera

and did use the feminine form of the title (*cavaliera*) to announce their husbands' status and their own elite station.³²

The relationship between supplicants and the state was never one-sided. If nothing else, the stories retold in the petitions illustrate how dependent Venice was on its sea and mainland subjects. After more than a generation in Venice, the Greeks continued to rely on, or perhaps cling to, the state for offices, licences, and work, reflecting those Venetian habits and patterns they had established long ago in their homelands.

Death and Memory

As they stated in their 1511 petition, Greeks wanted their own church where they could worship according to the Eastern rite and have space to bury their dead. Once permission was secured and building commenced, two things happened: first, the number of requests for burial in the cemetery at San Giorgio rose dramatically and remained high throughout the century; second, everyone who had the means contributed to the church's building fund. But giving was not confined only to the Greek church and *scuola*, and family and friends. It extended beyond the community to guilds, charities, religious houses, hospitals, orphanages, and artists. The shift from an exclusively Greek to a broader citywide outlook reflected the Greeks' gradual integration into Venetian life.

Death and Burial Rites

Parish death registers (*necrologi*), the archives of the health authorities (the *Provveditori alla Sanità*), wills, and the account books of the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci contain information about the manner of Greek deaths and burials. The *scuola*'s account books recorded details of the deceased's burial and funeral expenses and their bequests. *Provveditori alla Sanità* and *necrologi*

militia, et alla dignità de cavaliero' (and we have conceded [to him] the right to wear [carry] the belt, the sword, weapons, spurs, dress and all the other military decorations, and to benefit from the honours, liberty and privileges that belong to a true militia and and to knightly dignity): ASV, *Senato*, Deliberazioni Privilegi, reg. III, fol. 11r, 15 January 1571.

³² The female form, *la cavaliera*, was used by Isabetta Cuvli, the wife of the Cavaliere Andrea Londano; her family also used the term when referring to her. Andrea Londano was a scholar and a collector of books and artwork with extensive commercial interests in publishing houses. He was also heavily involved in the book and art trade and collected for several Spanish clients. ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 439, Giovanni Figolin, 22, 1 October 1582.

archives provide further information about the deceased such as date, cause, and place of death; the deceased's age (often an estimate) and occupation; the name of the attending doctor, if there was one; and the burial site.³³ Like Venetians and others, many Greeks nominated their preferred burial site, but this did not guarantee their wishes were fulfilled. Lack of space was a problem common to all parish cemeteries. Before they had San Giorgio or San Biagio, Greeks were buried in their (Latin) parish's cemetery. After they acquired the chapel at San Biagio, they were allocated a Greek section of that church's cemetery. Theodora da Corfu and Pauli Avuri both asked to be buried at San Biagio, 'in loco alui sepolltura i confratelli e suore della nation greca' (in the place where the brothers and sisters of the Greek nation are buried). The scholar Costantino Paleocapa also requested burial at San Biagio but did not specify the Greek section.³⁴ Not surprisingly, once construction of San Giorgio dei Greci began, many (but not all) Greeks wanted to be buried on that church's grounds rather than in Latin cemeteries. Others did not indicate a preference, leaving the decision about their interment to family, friends, or the executors of their wills. A small sample of 250 wills (Table 5.1) supports this.

Table 5.1: Burial Preferences 1498–1600

Burial Site	Number of people (percentage)
No preference/decision left to others	121 (48%)
San Giorgio dei Greci	80 (32%)
Latin grounds	49 (20%)
TOTAL	250 (100%)

³³ Death records need to be treated with caution, especially information like the deceased's age and the duration of his or her illness, as both were often exaggerated. For example, the death notice of the *capo dei stratioti* Demetri Paleologo (d. 6 August 1571) states: 'M. Dimitrio Paleologo Greco d'anni 90 amalada da vechiezza' (Sir Dimitrio Paleologo, a Greek, 90 years old, died of old age). Had Paleologo been ninety years old when he died, he would have been born in 1481, five years before his parents' marriage and six to ten years before the birth of his older brother Paolo and five of his six sisters. A high numerical age usually meant the person was very old. Paleologo's death notice is in ACPV, *registri dei morti*, reg. 1, San Giuliano, fol. 44r, 6 August 1571.

³⁴ Theodora, Avuri, and Paleocapa made wills with the same notary, Girolamo Costa: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 263, Girolamo Costa, 71, 9 April 1520 (Pauli Avuri di Patrasso); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 263, 85, 26 September 1520 (Theodora da Corfu); and ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 263, 18 October 1521 (Paleocapa).

Three people, all Cretans, asked for their bodies to be shipped to their hometowns for burial. Only one of the three, the merchant Giacomo Caravella, later revised his will and withdrew this clause; in the end Caravella was buried at San Giorgio dei Greci in the small cemetery behind the church.³⁵ Marietta Tapinò died on 1 January 1592 (mv), and her death was recorded in the *necrologi* of her parish, San Pietro di Castello. It is not known whether her body was then transported to Candia, as she had instructed, or buried in Venice.³⁶ The third person, Pietro Condolignoti, was transported to his hometown of Cania in Crete, where he was buried alongside his mother and children.³⁷

The funeral traditions of both the Latin and Greek churches included prayers for the dead; monetary gifts to priests; the distribution of money and food to the poor of the parish by the family of the deceased; gifts to hospitals, orphanages, and other institutions; and among artisans, the attendance of colleagues at a brother's funeral and burial. The shipwright Demetri di Napoli di Romania was a member of the Scuola of San Nicolò dei Greci and attended services at San Giorgio dei Greci; however, in his will he left instructions that he wanted to be buried alongside his fellow brethren in the church of San Domingo di Castello where the shipwrights had a cemetery.³⁸ In each of the wills he made between 1578 and 1581, Zuane Gianà wrote: 'I want my body buried in the church of San Giorgio dei Greci, and that it should be accompanied by the Scuola dei Marangoni, of which I find myself a member.'³⁹ Often, however, decisions regarding burials were dictated by factors beyond the control of testators or their loved ones. The couple Bella di Patrasso and Zorzi di Santa Maura nominated San Giorgio's cemetery. They died within a few weeks of each other, but their burial site is unknown. The *scuola's* account books recorded the receipts of gifts from their estate but said nothing about funeral

³⁵ Giacomo Caravella made three wills and a codicil with Marcantonio Figolin: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 393, MA Figolin, 413, 25 March 1565; 473, 26 September 1570; 473, 13 April 1574 (will) and 12 May 1574 (codicil).

³⁶ ACPV, *registri dei morti*, reg. 1, San Pietro di Castello, fol. 50r.

³⁷ Condolignoti's will is in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 280, Zuanmaria Celega, no. 619, 12 September 1570. He died a few weeks after making it, on 1 October 1570. An inventory of his house was completed on 6 October 1570: ASV, *Cancellaria Inferiore*, Misc. Notai Diversi, Inventari, b. 41, no. 31.

³⁸ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 121, 25 June 1580.

³⁹ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 200, 19 June 1578, 30 November 1581, and 6 December 1581: 'voglio il corpo mio sii seppelito nella chiesa de San Zorzi di Greci, et chel sii accompagnato dalla Scuola di Marangoni nella qual io mi atrovo.'

or burial expenses.⁴⁰ Bella and Zorzi tied a generous bequest to their interment at San Giorgio, the gift of their house. The *scuola* desperately needed gifts like that to support the building fund, but its hands were tied if the cemetery at San Giorgio was full. It is unclear what happened then, whether an estate's executors allowed the gift to go ahead or not. *Scuola* officials recorded all bequests and funeral expenses but only after someone representing the deceased paid for the funeral or left a bequest in the deceased's name.

Once construction of the church began, burial precedence was given to those Greeks who lived in Sant' Antonin parish. Greeks from other parishes had to get permission from their parish priest to be buried at San Giorgio, again assuming there was room.⁴¹ Once permission was secured, the Latin clergy accompanied the coffin to the door of San Giorgio, and the Greek priests carried it inside for the funeral; the reverse never happened. It is unclear how easy or difficult it was to get permission to be buried outside one's parish, but the decision was not the Greek or Latin authorities' alone, given the problems of overcrowded cemeteries. The issue of available space was further exacerbated when Greek elites, imitating their Venetian friends, began erecting large family tombs inside and outside the church. These took up precious space. Originally the church's courtyard was common land, and no one was allowed to erect private tombs there. This rule was strongly enforced in the first half of the century, but over time it was allowed to lapse altogether. There is evidence, clearly visible today, of large family tombs in the courtyard and inside the church. How this happened is not clear, but the decision to relax the rules was probably influenced by the generous monetary gifts elites promised the church. The increasing domination of wealthy office-holders in the *Banca* and other *scuola* committees and the need to finance construction probably influenced the change in the rules.⁴²

Wealthy Greeks had quite lavish funerals that incorporated Greek and Latin rituals. The funeral arrangements often included members of the mendicant orders in the funeral cortège, a distinctly Latin custom and one entail-

⁴⁰ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 124, Francesco Bianco, no. 138, 29 June 1533. On 8 January and 1 February 1540 (mv), the *scuola* received some money from the estate of Bella and Zorzi respectively: Liata, 'Death Notices of Greeks of Venice', p. 224.

⁴¹ Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, p. 41.

⁴² Some of the wealthiest Greek families had tombs in San Giorgio dei Greci, even though they did not live in Sant' Antonin parish. The most notable were Giacomo Samariari (San Basso), the Cuvli sisters (San Severo), and the Soderini (San Giovanni in Bragora). All three families left generous bequests to the church and *scuola*.

ing considerable expense.⁴³ The merchant Giacomo Samariari planned his funeral in great detail, leaving nothing to chance. Besides the brethren from the Scuola Grande di San Teodoro, where he was a member, Samariari provided for twenty-four mendicant brothers to accompany his coffin to San Giorgio dei Greci. He wanted to be interred inside the church 'in the place where the stone with the eagle is'. To ensure his wishes were fulfilled to the letter, he attached a generous legacy to the church and the *scuola*: Samariari promised a considerable sum of money to cover the expenses for painting the interior of the church, and two thousand ducats for the construction of a campanile.⁴⁴ Nicolò Cuvli set aside a hundred ducats towards his funeral expenses and ten ducats for the priests to say masses for his soul. As he was a member of the Scuola Grande di San Marco, Cuvli asked that his confreres accompany his coffin to San Giorgio dei Greci.⁴⁵ Cuvli and Samariari were wealthy individuals, and their funerals reflect their class and status in Greek and Venetian society. But wealth combined with nobility and decades of service to the Republic invited a more prominent Venetian presence at one's funeral. Sanuto recorded the funeral of the 'most illustrious *capo dei stratioti*' Teodoro Paleologo:

On this day [3 September 1532], lord Theodoro Paleologo, our most loyal [one], who was a capo of the stratioti, was buried [...] he lived in San Giovanni in Bragora; this morning the body was placed on a bier dressed in the Greek manner, a peacock blue cloak lined [in a] crimson coloured woolen cloth, and a hat on [his] head. He was buried at the 19th hour at the start of the obsequies; there was the head of the parish, twenty invited priests, the head of San Marco, Gesuati with candles in hand and [...] maroneri (marinari) with candles, as well as all the heads of the Signoria each carrying a candle. He was carried to the newly built Greek church of San Giorgio in the parish of Sant' Antonin and placed in the church; the office was said in Greek and the women wept over the body and pulled their hair. Then he was interred, placed in a coffin and buried in the said church, in the ground. I would have gone to see but it was all over and dirt was sprinkled over the coffin. God grant him peace.⁴⁶

⁴³ Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, pp. 40–45.

⁴⁴ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 204, 9 April 1580. There is evidence that Samariari got his wish. In October 1586, Zuane Negri da Cypro made his will. He nominated San Giorgio as his preferred burial site, specifically inside the church at the site of the eagle, 'where Giacomo Samariari is buried': ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 47, Bortolomeo Bressan, fol. 2r, 21 October 1586.

⁴⁵ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 478, Paolo de Grandis, no. 425, 12 March 1575.

⁴⁶ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, LVI, 877–8. The *Gesuati* were Dominicans of strict observance from

Sanuto's account is interesting for a number of reasons. He gives a vivid description of Greek burial customs and rites. The attendance of high religious and secular officials reflected Paleologo's status. The participation of Latin clergy at the funeral illustrated a level of understanding between the two religious cultures and rites, particularly at a time when such understanding was being severely tested.⁴⁷ Above all, the funeral symbolized the esteem Venetians and Greeks had for Paleologo, one of the Republic's and the community's best-loved servants.

Rite did not exclude people from participating in the rituals of the Greek church, joining the Greek *scuola*, or holding positions in its various offices. About 25 per cent of Greeks followed the Latin rite, and many of them were active members of San Nicolò and attended mass in San Giorgio when called upon to do so. Couples belonging to different rites joined in the celebrations and festivities of both the Latin and Greek religious calendars. This cross-over from one religious tradition to another, while not frequent, was not unusual. Andriana da Venezia had a Venetian mother, a Dalmatian father, and two Greek husbands (not at the same time). She was buried in San Giorgio dei Greci, and her coffin was accompanied there by members of the Scuola degli Schiavoni, where she was a member.⁴⁸ Several Greeks nominated Latin cemeteries as their resting place, but this did not mean they were Latin rite adherents, as other factors influenced their decision. Some people had family tombs in Latin churches dating back to the time before San Biagio and San Giorgio. Angelica da Coron chose San Francesco della Vigna where her mother's bones were kept.⁴⁹ Marina di Napoli di Romania was buried with her niece at San Iseppo, her parish church.⁵⁰ Some Greek women asked to be dressed 'in the habit of the Madonna', a practice followed by both Greek and Venetian women. Isabetta Barelli, a Scuola di San Nicolò member and wife of one of its early guardians, was buried in Santa Maria Formosa, in the tombs of the Scuola della

the monastery of the Gesuati on the Zattere. *Maroneri* is *marinari*: it was a sign of respect to have sailors in a funeral procession.

⁴⁷ Paleologo died at one of the most difficult moments in the already fraught relationship between the community and the Venetian patriarch, Girolamo Querini. One might assume that the patriarch did not attend the funeral.

⁴⁸ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 64, 27 June 1580: 'il corpo mio sii sepolto a S. Zorzi di Greci et chel sia accompagnato dalla Scuola di Schiavoni.'

⁴⁹ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 43, Avidio Branco, no. 37, 14 November 1533: 'Voglio sia sepolto nella chiesa de San Francesco della Vigna dove se sepolano li osse della q. mia madre.'

⁵⁰ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 285, 23 January 1585.

Madonna.⁵¹ Her Barelli in-laws were deeply involved in Greek affairs. They were merchants, scribes, copyists, and one was the head priest at San Giorgio for a time. But Isabetta's choice of burial was her decision, not her husband's or his family's.

Burials and bequests went hand in hand because in most instances people who named a burial ground left a gift to its church. I found only two examples of a testator asking for a Greek burial but leaving a legacy to a Latin institution. One was a woman named Isabetta, who had a Greek husband but was probably not Greek herself. She wanted to be buried in San Giorgio dei Greci and paid the appropriate fee but left a small monetary gift to the Pietà orphanage. The other was Maria Gavradopula, who also nominated the Greek cemetery at San Giorgio, set aside the expenses for this, and then left a small bequest to the church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo.⁵² For the majority, however, there was a strong correlation between burial and bequest. Faith, ritual, and custom were important criteria in determining someone's identity, but they were not exclusively so. A person need not be Greek rite nor a member at San Nicolò to be called a Greek. The evidence points to a complex community that embraced its own common cultural and religious values, and blended local customs and rituals in with them.

Bequeathing

Giving was a normal part of early modern society. It expressed obligation, affection, and respect. It was private and public. Private giving imposed obligations, since recipients were expected to adhere to the terms and conditions of the gift. In its simplest form, this might be saying prayers for the soul of the deceased or distributing alms to the poor. It was often more complicated though. Some donors required recipients to devote considerable time and expense to fulfilling the terms of their gifts. This might include maintaining chapels and properties, providing dowries for poor girls, and caring for widows and the aged. Generally, the level of giving depended on the ability of the individual. Once their family was taken care of, testators gave to friends and to a charity or a religious institution. A sample of 250 donors showed that most (52 per cent) only gifted the Greek *scuola* and church, once more reinforcing the point that

⁵¹ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 43, Avidio Branco, no. 116, 27 January 1539.

⁵² ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 477, Paolo de Grandis, no. 176, 30 July 1583 (Isabetta); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 594, Nicolò Licino, 334, 17 September 1596 (Maria Gavradopula).

most Greek men and women had little cash to spare. A smaller group (30 per cent) of donors gave only to Venetian organizations. In both instances these donors came from the lower end of the socio-economic scale. People who left something to both Greek and Venetian institutions (18 per cent) were better off, not necessarily wealthy, but comfortable. Generally speaking, people gave between two to five ducats to institutions and between five to twenty ducats for poor relief. Working and lower middle class bequests included some cash and personal items such as clothing, household goods and keepsakes. Wealthy donors were naturally more generous. To family, close friends, and relations they distributed clothing (sleeves and shirts were popular), cutlery (especially silver forks), precious jewellery, rugs and other furnishings and furniture, icons, tapestries, books, and paintings. Servants, adopted children, and unmarried nieces and goddaughters received beds, mattresses and bedding, and cash towards their dowries.

Regardless of class and wealth, the family came first, friends and acquaintances next, and then institutions. If they had no immediate family in Venice, a not uncommon situation among immigrant communities, Greek women and men turned to close friends, colleagues, neighbours, and servants and left them what little they owned. They relied heavily on their friends to be executors of their estates, even their heirs. Fiorenza Conomo was close to her landlords, Rosana Bertoloti and her son Marco. She left Rosana a house and land (fifteen *campi*) she owned in Pola. Marco received a portion of Fiorenza's dowry and the other portion went to the church of San Nicolò dei Greci in Pola. In turn, the Bertoloti were obliged to say forty masses a year for Fiorenza in the Greek church in Venice.⁵³ Fiorenza left nothing to her husband, Marco Davila da Cipro, even though he was alive and well when she made her will. More significant were the obligations she placed on the Bertoloti, who were not Greek rite but yet promised to offer prayers for Fiorenza in the Greek church.

In the absence of family and good friends, people turned to authority figures to look after their estates and care for young children. Zuane di Malvassia appointed Metropolitan Seviro as guardian of his young nephew (his late brother's boy) should Zuane die before the lad reached maturity. Others left sums of money and personal belongings to people who looked after them. Constantini da Corfu made Cattarina, the woman who cared for him, his sole heir; Zuane

⁵³ 'lasso mei commissarii la preditta dona Rosana et ser Marco suo fiol, con obligato che mi facino dir quaranta messe all' anno per l' anima mia qua in Venetia nella gesia de San Zorzi di Greci': ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 157, Antonio Brinis, no. 374, 20 September 1585.

Nassin named his first wife Anzolla the chief beneficiary of his estate but also set aside money for an apprentice in their house and for his old nurse, Maria, who lived with the family; Cali da Coron had no family of her own and so left her small estate to her employers, the patrician Diedo family.⁵⁴ With some exceptions, like Cali and Fiorenza, friends and authority figures tended to be other Greek women and men, reinforcing the pattern of compatriot social networks discussed earlier.

Many of the *scuola*'s property holdings came from single people and childless couples. Bella di Patrasso willed her house to San Giorgio dei Greci after hers and her husband's deaths. Zorzi da Coron, a mariner, declared that if he died without issue, then his house would go to the Greek church. After his marriage and the birth of his first child, Costantino Papagianni changed his will and appointed his wife and child his heirs but added a clause leaving his estate to the church in the absence of future heirs.⁵⁵ Some people made special arrangements with the *scuola*: it would receive a portion of the benefactor's income if it fulfilled the donor's conditions. For example, Nicolò Cuvli left the *residuum* of his estate to the *scuola* and church, but only if there were no Cuvli of legitimate birth in Venice in the future. Should this happen, the *scuola*, as the administrator of the *residuum*, had to honour the primary condition of the gift: it had to use the income from Cuvli's bequest to dower poor Greek girls through an annual lottery. Cuvli then set out the lottery's rules. Given there were Cuvli in Venice well into the seventeenth century, the *scuola* probably never got its full share of this gift.⁵⁶ Nicolò's niece Gratirosa took a more straightforward approach to giving: she left the *scuola* twelve hundred ducats, no strings attached. The money was part of the income from one of her properties in Feltre.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 219, 18 May 1591 (Zuane di Malvassia); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 99, 17 March 1584 (Constantini da Corfu); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 203, 18 June 1586 (Zuane Nassin). Cali da Coron's will is in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 131, Pietro Bon, no. 129, 9 February 1505.

⁵⁵ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 124, Francesco Bianco, no. 138, 29 June 1533 (Bella di Patrasso); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 577, Nicolò Licino, no. 152, 21 June 1540 (Zorzi da Coron); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 117, 31 August 1585 (Costantino Papagianni).

⁵⁶ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 478, Paolo de Grandis, no. 425, 12 March 1575.

⁵⁷ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, Federico Figolin, b. 382, no. 166, 29 February 1599, 25 July 1603, and 7 August 1607.

The *Banca* was restricted in terms of what it could and could not do with gifts of real estate it administered and the income generated from these. Most properties were heavily mortgaged, and all *scuole*, hospitals, charities, and other institutions had to pay the mortgages in full before they could take possession. The problem for San Nicolò dei Greci (and probably most other institutions) was that it had to borrow the money to pay the mortgage, which meant incurring an even higher debt. Adding to the problem was the state of some of the buildings. Many were in need of repair, always an expensive proposition in a city like Venice. No wonder then that the *scuola* preferred to sell or rent properties that came into its possession. Rent was the preferred option because it guaranteed a steady income.⁵⁸

Like everyone else, Greeks favoured city-wide charities that helped the poor, the sick, the orphaned, and the wayward. The most important of these were the four houses (*case*) that looked after the less fortunate: the Zitelle, the house for training young girls for work in trade or domestic service, or for taking the veil; the Catecumeni, for the conversion of Jewish and Muslim children and adults; the Derelitti, the hospital of Santi Giovanni e Paolo; and the Soccorso, for retired prostitutes. Other well-known houses were the Pietà orphanage for orphaned and poor children, and the Incurabili, the hospital that treated people suffering from incurable diseases. These institutions provided for the common good at a time when few public health and welfare services were available. They attracted monetary and other gifts from all socio-economic classes and ethnic groups. Greeks who gave exclusively to Venetian institutions included donations to one or more of these houses. Those who gave to both Greek and Venetian institutions nominated at least one of the houses. At the same time Greeks also gave to Venetian churches, monasteries, and convents in their neighbourhoods and beyond. For example, Marina Catticora distributed cash among the Derelitti, Incurabili, and Pietà hospitals, her parish church of San Severo, and the Zitelle.⁵⁹ Testators did not distinguish between Greek and Venetian poor, adhering to the notion that the poor were poor, regardless of class, ethnicity, or place of origin.

⁵⁸ The problem of mortgaged and run-down properties was not unique to San Nicolò dei Greci. At times the magistracy responsible for properties left to public institutions, the *Dieci Savii*, sold these at public auction. Once all costs and the mortgage were paid, the *Dieci Savii* awarded the buyer(s) a share of the purchase price. Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, p. 53.

⁵⁹ AAIEV, *Testamenti e Donazioni con processi*, b. 18, fasc. 228, 25 June 1599.

A few Greek men and women left legacies to religious houses beyond Venice. Most of these were in their homelands, and giving was a way of reconnecting, remembering, and being remembered. A few gave to religious houses further afield like Greek monasteries and convents in Sicily and Mt Sinai (St Catherine's and its dependencies), and the monastic communities at Meteora in north central Greece and Mt Athos. Meteora and Mt Athos were important religious communities and pilgrimage sites of the Eastern Church, and they continue to attract pilgrims, donations and patronage today. Demetri di Salonichio was member of the Greek scuola between 1499 and 1524 and served in various offices (including *gastaldo*) from 1509 to 1522. In 1525 he made his will. He gave twenty ducats to Vatopedi monastery on Mt Athos, and between two and five ducats to Venetian institutions like the monasteries at San Trovaso, Santa Maria degli Angeli, and San Francesco della Vigna.⁶⁰ Thirty years later, Demetri Vergi gave fifty ducats to the Vatopedi monastery at Mt Athos.⁶¹ Chiara Cisco da Candia left fifty gold ducats to the nuns at the convent of San Giorgio dei Greci, ten ducats to the Greek metropolitan, and instructed her sister Zuana to offer charity (she did not define what kind or how much) to the nuns at the convent of Santa Caterina dei Greci in Messina.⁶² The brothers Andrea, Zuane, and Theodoro Catticora da Napoli di Romania singled out religious houses in their *patria*: the churches of St Demetrios and the Anargiri, and the monasteries of S. Domenico and S. Demetrio.⁶³ Andrea della Vigna nominated hospitals in his native Zante, and Zuane Carvuri urged his sons to continue the upkeep and financial support of a chapel in the family's native Napoli di Romania.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 270, Marc'Antonio Cavagnis, no. 184, 26 July 1525.

⁶¹ Demetri Vergi wrote in his will: 'Item lasso a Monte Santo della Salonichi chiamato in Greco Aihoros (the Holy Mountain, or Mt. Athos) ducati 50': ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 577, Nicolò Licino, no. 108, 23 April 1546.

⁶² Cisco did not explain her connection to Messina or to the particular convent: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 13, Andrea Alberti, 10, 23 July 1580.

⁶³ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 40, 1 April 1588 and 3 April 1588 (Andrea Catticora); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 39, 23 October 1585 (Theodoro Catticora); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 343, Nicolò Doglioni, no. 288, 2 June 1596 (Zuane Catticora). S. Demetrio Englisto, the Anargiri, and S. Teodosio were Eastern rite religious houses, while San Domenico was Latin rite.

⁶⁴ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 204, 9 April 1580 and 10 January 1582 (Samariari); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 41, 13 January 1545 (della Vigna); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 199, 24 April 1544 (Carvuri).

No one organized giving as carefully and thoughtfully as a woman named Filippa (no surname) from Napoli di Romania. Filippa was the survivor of Manusso, a sword-maker. The couple had no children. She was a servant and knew some of the most important people in the community, possibly through her employer. She chose three men, all Naupliots like her, to be the trustees of her estate: Andronico Cuvli, his son Lorenzo, and Zorzi Mormori. At some point, probably by the mid-1540s, Filippa received an income bearing office from the magistracy responsible for Naupliots and Monemvasians. She leased this office and for the next thirty years collected the rent. According to the terms of the gift, Filippa had the right to say how part of the rent from the office was spent for ten years after her death. She gave no indication how much money was involved, but she carefully planned its distribution. In one sense Filippa's will was a pre- and post-death Ten Year Plan. Every year one or more religious houses would receive a monetary gift out of the rental account. In the first year, the recipients were San Giorgio dei Greci and a monastery in her native Napoli di Romania; the second year, it was the turn of two monasteries on Mt Athos, the Lavra and San Dionisio; in the third, another monastery on Mt Athos, and the monastery of St Catherine at Mt Sinai; in year four, it was the turn of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the convent of Santi Anargiri in Napoli di Romania, and another convent on Zante; in the fifth year, the recipients were two convents in Napoli di Romania as well as Filippa's friend, dona Vittoria.⁶⁵ Then the cycle was repeated. In this way Filippa satisfied her religious commitments and had many people praying for her soul.

* * *

Working- and middle-class bequests reflected the donor's personal and spiritual needs. Wealthy families were different, but extremely wealthy ones were even more so. While they too wanted to be remembered and prayed for by family and friends, they also wanted something more, to leave a permanent, lasting legacy.

Much has already been written about Giacomo Samariari. He was a generous donor but at the same time he expected all his demands to be met. He wanted to be buried in a particular place in San Giorgio dei Greci. If the church and the *scuola* let him have his way, both would be handsomely compensated. He set aside money to hire painters to decorate the interior of San Giorgio. He offered two thousand ducats towards the cost of constructing the campanile.

⁶⁵ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 343, Nicolò Doglioni, no. 248, 13 November 1579.

He gave the church a silver bowl worth one hundred ducats on the condition the *scuola* never sold, mortgaged, or leased it. The bowl had to be on permanent display in a prominent place inside the church, otherwise his executors were instructed to remove it from the church and send it to the patriarchate in Constantinople and rescind all other monetary gifts.⁶⁶ Samariari bequeathed the rental income from his house in San Basso to the *scuola* and left instructions about how the money was to be spent: half was for the purchase of oil and wax for the church and the other half for two priests to say bi-weekly masses for all Samariari souls, that is, his own, his ancestors and his descendants.

His generosity extended to Venetian institutions. Like other men of his stature, he was a member of several associations. He was a member of the Scuola di Santissimo Sacramento di San Basso, the Scuola Grande di San Teodoro, and the guild and *scuola* of mariners (*scuola e fraterna dei marinari*). San Teodoro received one hundred ducats and forty candles, the Marinari guild another one hundred ducats, while the brothers from both *scuole* were obliged to accompany his coffin to his funeral and burial. The Pietà and the hospitals of Santi Giovanni e Paolo and the Incurabili each received five hundred ducats. The parish priest at San Basso got twenty-five ducats, the poor who accompanied his coffin to the burial would receive eight *soldi* each, and the labourers (*fadighenti*) who took part in the funeral procession would receive twenty *soldi* each. His close friend Anzola Alberti, prioress of the hospital of the Incurabili, received one hundred ducats in cash to distribute to charity.

Samariari worked hard to ensure his legacy. Like all good merchants, he did not trust anyone completely, including *scuola* officials at San Nicolò. Having served on the board himself, he knew how difficult it was to satisfy each and every donor's wishes. This is why he set out strict terms and conditions. He tried to make it as difficult as possible for the Greeks to deny him his wishes by promising a substantial amount of money (the less charitable might call it blackmail) to guarantee he got his way. If the Greeks did not respect all his wishes, Samariari instructed his executors to transfer his largesse to Santi Giovanni e Paolo. To show he meant business, he even selected an alternative burial site in that church, near the main door, 'because no water goes in there',

⁶⁶ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 204, 9 April 1580: 'Lasso alla ditta chiesa de San Zorzi di Greci da Venetia se sarò seppelito nella ditta chiesa sotto l'aquila, el mio bacil d'ariento che me costa ducati cento, per metter dentro el pan benedetto. Et non essendo seppelito in chiesa come ho ditto vadi esso bacil al patriarcato de Constantinopoli. Et caso fusse accettato in ditta chiesa et posto sotto l'aquila non voglio che detto bacil si possi vender nè impegnar, nè alienar in modo alcuno per niuna cosa ma resti in perpetuo nella ditta chiesa.'

left instructions about the placement of his body inside the coffin, and chose a new inscription for his tomb ('The burial site of Giacomo Samariari').⁶⁷ He included a thousand ducats in cash for the monastery at Santi Giovanni e Paolo and generously allowed the abbot the freedom to decide how best to spend it.⁶⁸ And the Greeks? Besides everything else, they would also lose the income from the rent on his house. Half of this would now go to Santi Giovanni e Paolo, and the other half to the Scuola di Santissimo Sacramento di San Basso on one condition: that the monks and the brothers at both places said a weekly mass for his soul.⁶⁹

What is one to make of a man like Samariari? He was certainly one of a kind — no other Greek made as many demands or used their wealth so blatantly to secure their objectives. The documentation he left runs to hundreds of pages of commercial contracts, a lengthy will and codicil, and a very long inventory of his home and warehouses. These all reflect a confident man who knew what he wanted and how to go about getting it. He was a respected leader of the Greek community, he had acquired patrician in-laws through the marriages of his two nieces, and he felt equally at home in the company of mariners and artisans. He was used to getting his way in this life, and he expected to do the same in the afterlife. Therefore, it is not surprising that he chose the recipients of his patronage and his burial site on the basis of prestige and maximum exposure — of himself, his family, and his wealth. The organization of his funeral and burial and the distribution of gifts was more like a series of well-planned and executed transactions to secure him a place in the community's history. Samariari defined himself by his wealth and the power it gave him in Venice and his native Zante. He remained proud of his Zachynthian roots and worked to ensure his island estates were profitable and remained in family hands.

He rewarded people he trusted. Family, friends, servants, and employees received large sums of money, household goods, and jewellery. His relatives (he did not always explain the relationship) inherited his vineyards and houses on Zante. He set aside money for the dowries of poor Greek and Venetian girls. He dismissed several debts owed to him and put up money to ransom Zachynthians enslaved by the Turks. He was evenly open-handed to Venetian

⁶⁷ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 204, 9 April 1580.

⁶⁸ Santi Giovanni e Paolo was one of the most important churches in the city. It held the tombs of prominent individuals and doges. It says a lot about Samariari's character that he chose this church as his alternative burial site.

⁶⁹ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 204, 9 April 1580.

and Greek institutions. It is not clear how much of this paid off. He had no direct heirs; none of the documents mention a wife or children. In his later years he was beset with personal tragedies that he found difficult to cope with. The chief beneficiary of his wealth was a nephew, Zanetto, but he died sometime between 1581 and 1582, and this caused Samariari much grief. After Zanetto's death Samariari drew up a codicil to his 1580 will. It is full of doubts: what if this person dies or that institution does not fulfil his wishes, will there have to be new arrangements, and so on. The confidence and the arrogance on show in the will disappeared by the time of the codicil, replaced now by a sense of fatality. As far as his burial and funeral were concerned, however, he remained adamant that the highest respect should be shown him. In the 1582 codicil he wrote that he stood by the original plans for his burial, and then added 'se l'arcivescovo di Greci nominato nel mio testamento non si attoverà alla mia sepoltura voglio chel legato che li lasso sii nullo, ma attraversandosi debbi haver esso legato' (that if the archbishop of the Greeks named in my will is not be present at my funeral, then I want the legacy I left to him annulled).⁷⁰ Samariari was neither the first nor the last person to use monetary persuasion to achieve his aims, but he certainly did it with more flair than most.

Another equally wealthy donor-with-conditions was Zotto Cigara, from the city of Ioannina in Epirus. Cigara had worked in the court of the voyvoda of Moldavia before moving with his family to Venice. He made his will in June 1599. Among other things, he left twelve hundred ducats to establish a convent for Greek nuns who up until then lived in shared accommodation or rented rooms in private homes. Most of the money was for the purchase of a particular house that Cigara thought could easily be converted into a convent. He set out detailed instructions about the renovations and the interior decorations. Above all, he wanted to make sure there would never be any doubts as to the identity of the convent's patron. The Cigara coat of arms would be prominently placed over the convent's front door and below it would be this inscription: 'Zotto Zigara of the city of Ioannina and *protospatario* of the late lord Petro, Prince of Moldavia.' The same sentence had to be chisled on a wall in the refectory, with the following addition:

and likewise above the table where they (the nuns) will eat there should be a painting of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and I will be kneeling before Her so that the nuns see me as they are eating and can say 'God, do not lose him.'⁷¹

⁷⁰ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 11, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 204, 9 April 1580.

⁷¹ AAIEV, *Testamenti e Donazioni con processi*, b. 18, reg. 217, fols 26v–29r, 11 June 1599.

If the nuns and the *scuola* did not agree to his terms, then Cigara's executors had to distribute a thousand ducats of the original twelve hundred ducat (convent) gift among twenty monasteries on Mt Athos, where the monks were then obliged to say prayers for the repose of his soul.

Cigara gave San Giorgio dei Greci six hundred ducats. This was invested in the state debt, the Monte. Once a year *scuola* officers were obliged to distribute the interest earned in the following manner: half to pay priests' wages, and the other half towards the construction costs of Cigara's tomb. Like Samariari before him, Cigara designated the location of the tomb and the clergy's obligations: 'to bury my body, and put it in the place near the door of the Holy of Holies (*Sancta Sanctorum*) and that the priests ought to be obliged every Saturday to say a *Trisagio* (prayers) over my tomb'.⁷² If the priests did not do as he wished, his executors had instructions to withhold the money from the Monte investment. Cigara also bequeathed large sums to other causes, but without conditions. Among these were churches and monasteries in his native Ioannina and on Mt Athos. He also set up a dowry fund for poor Greek girls and set aside monetary gifts for the hospitals at Santi Giovanni e Paolo, San Pietro di Castello, and the Incurabili. He gave money to his friends. The bulk of his estate, however, went to his wife Maria and his four daughters.

Giving in general satisfied the conscience, and like charity it was part of daily life. A gift's value was less important than the act itself. It was a way of repaying a kindness and offering help and support to family, friends, and the institutions that cared for the sick and the disadvantaged. Giving was inclusive since it was not defined by social class or wealth. Everyone gave; the value of the gift was less important than the act itself.

Cultural Patronage

Once construction of the church started, most Greeks made a small monetary gift to the building fund. Naturally, the wealthy gave generously. Some targeted specific works. The merchant Demetri Vergi put down two hundred ducats for the purchase of building materials and Giacomo Caravella left money to pay workmen.⁷³ The *Banca* assumed responsibility for tendering, vetting, and hiring architects, builders, and workers. In 1536 it ran a competition to

⁷² AAIEV, *Testamenti e Donazioni con processi*, b. 18, reg. 217, fols 26v–29r, 11 June 1599. The *Trisagio* is prayers for the dead.

⁷³ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 577, Nicolò Licino, no. 108, 23 April 1546 (Vergi); ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 393, Marcantonio Figolin, no. 413, 25 March 1565 (Caravella).



Figure 5.1: Palma il Giovane, Cristo Pantocrator. Scuoletta di San Nicolò dei Greci. Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia.

choose the most suitable architects to design and oversee construction of the church. It awarded the commission to Sante Lombardo di Tullio. Lombardo drew up the design for the church and supervised construction until 1547; he was then succeeded first by Giannantonio Chiona (1548–87) and then by Bernardo Ongarin (1587–1603). Another committee had the responsibility for the church's interior and exterior decorations. Many of the artists it hired were well-known Greeks like Tomio Battà, Zorzi Klotzas, and Michiel Damaskinos, but generally all the competitions run by the *scuola* attracted both Greek and non-Greek artists. At one meeting on 20 November 1597, one committee member, a great admirer of Palma il Giovane, recommended the artist to the brethren; at the time the committee was looking for artists to decorate the conches. A competition was organized, and Palma submitted a cartoon. In the end it was rejected because it was not sufficiently done 'in the Greek manner'; instead, the commission went to Tomio Battà. Today, Palma's painting ('Cristo Pantocrator'), based on the cartoon he submitted, hangs in the *scuoletta* above the stairs leading to the Sala del Capitolo (Fig. 5.1).⁷⁴

Large projects, such as the interior and exterior decoration of the new church, required generous financial input from donors, yet very few wealthy families became cultural patrons in the same way as Venetians did.⁷⁵ There is no single explanation for this, only a few observations. One is that Greek elites had not yet adopted the tradition of artistic and cultural patronage as fervently as Venetians. There is some evidence to support this. The Cuvli were among the richest mercantile families and community leaders throughout the century. They gave generously to institutions that helped the disadvantaged. Thousands of records of their commercial activities exist, but there is nothing that indicates Canachi Cuvli, his siblings, in-laws, or his children and grandchildren became cultural patrons. They were not alone: no Vergi, Condolignoti, or Curcumeli became cultural patrons of any note. It could simply be that like the majority of immigrants, these families had other priorities, like re-establishing themselves financially and socially in a new homeland.⁷⁶ In the early years of the seventeenth century, some of these families became *cittadini originarii*; it would be interesting to see if they then absorbed the customs and habits of their new status.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Viani, *Venezia: Museo delle icone bizantine e post bizantine*, pp. 81–82; Chatzidakis, *Icônes de Saint-Georges*, p. 18; Ioannou, 'Palma il Giovane e Giovanni Bilivert'.

⁷⁵ On private patronage, see Romano, 'Aspects of Patronage'.

⁷⁶ This is a central theme in Blake de Maria's book, especially Chapters 1 and 2; de Maria, *Becoming Venetian*, pp. 25–31.

⁷⁷ Among Greek *cittadini originarii* families were the Agapito, Calogerà, Caopenna

But this was in the future. In the sixteenth century the number of Greeks who had the means to be cultural patrons was very small, and those who did usually restricted their patronage to Greek and Venetian institutions catering to the health and spiritual needs of the city's inhabitants. There were, however, a few exceptions.

One of the earliest patrons was Anna Notara. Notara arrived in Venice sometime in the 1460s, possibly earlier, and lived there till her death in 1507. She never embraced the Greek community, but then she had nothing in common with sailors and artisans. Her inner circle included other Byzantine elites, her niece Eudoxia Cantacuzene and her family, the patricians Nicolò Mocenigo and Zuane Pisan, her *factotum*, the publisher Nicolò Vlastos, and her household staff. She did not join the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci and disliked attending Greek religious services at San Biagio; in fact, she asked for permission to have religious services said in her home, and the Senate kindly agreed to her request. Notara supported the Vlastos–Calergi printing press and paid for the printing of the splendid *Etymologicum Magnum*. This was published in July 1499, and Calergi acknowledged her support at the end of the book.⁷⁸ She gifted the *scuola* with a number of icons she had brought with her from Constantinople and with a further five hundred ducats for the eventual construction of a Greek church.⁷⁹

A very small number of individuals commissioned artwork either for their homes or the church. Two paintings are particularly special. There are very few representations of sixteenth-century Greeks, and these two paintings depict their dress and style and, more importantly, 'put a face to the name'. In April

(Cavopenna), Cigala (Cigara), Cuvli, Davila, Eugenio, Filomati, Flangini, Lascari, Litino, Martinengo, Nomicò, Nores, Paleologo, Podacataro, Rochas, Seguro, Singlitico, Soderini, Sozomeno, Spa, Spandolin. These families settled in Venice between the late fifteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries. da Mosto, *L'Archivio di Stato di Venezia*, pp. 74–77.

⁷⁸ According to Donald Nicol, Notara financed two publications of the Vlastos–Calergi press: the *Etymologicum Magnum* and an edition on Aristotle's *Categories*: Nicol, *The Byzantine Lady*, p. 106.

⁷⁹ Two fourteenth-century icons were gifted by Anna Notara. There is a third icon from the same period, but its donor is unknown. The first two icons are the 'Christ Pantocrator', which is in the *templum* at San Giorgio dei Greci, and 'Christ in Glory and the Twelve Apostles', now in the Hellenic Institute's Museum of Icons; the third icon, 'Madonna and Child with Apostles and Saints', is also in the museum. Descriptions of the three are in Chatzidakis, *Icones de Saint-Georges*, pp. 4–11; Viani, *Venezia: Museo delle icone bizantine e post bizantine*, pp. 23–24 and 98; Kazanaki-Lappa, *Guide to the Museum*, pp. 31–32 and 148. The gift of five hundred ducats is in Notara's will: ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 36, Troylo Manfredi, no. 1, 24 March 1493.

1546 two *capi dei stratioti*, the brothers Zuane and Zorzi Manessi, commissioned an icon of the *Deïseis* (ἡ Δέησις). Today the icon hangs in San Giorgio dei Greci on the south wall, to the right of the main entrance (Fig. 5.2, Plate 1).⁸⁰ It portrays Christ enthroned and surrounded by the Virgin and John the Baptist.⁸¹ A *capo dei stratioti* kneels at Christ's feet. Two more *capi dei stratioti* leading their horses appear in a panel at the foot of the painting. These are the patrons, Zuane and Zorzi Manessi. The three military men are in profile, a characteristic of Italian donor portraiture. They are wearing the same livery, but the older, bearded man's clothing has more gold thread. Their jackets include hanging sleeves, all decorated with the same pattern; the hanging sleeves were a characteristic of *stratioti* formal dress.⁸²

The art historian Manolis Chatzidakis identifies the man in the main panel kneeling before Christ as Zuane Manessi, 'one of the patrons', that is, the same Zuane in the lower left of the painting. He cited no evidence to support this.⁸³ Even a quick glance reveals that the man kneeling at Christ's feet is neither of the men in the lower panel. He is much older, his facial features are finer, and he has a beard which means he was older than the two younger, clean-shaven men. *Deïseis* means 'supplication', and the Manessi brothers' bequest may have been a tribute to the older man or a prayer on his behalf. His identity is not known, but given the similarities in their uniforms, the three men had a close relationship. A dedication in Greek and Latin dates the icon and identifies the donors by name:

† ΑΦΜΣΤ. ΑΠΡΙΛΛΙΟΥ ΚΑ ΔΕΗΣΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΔΟΥΛΩΝ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ
ΙΩ [ANNOY] MANESSH KAI TOY ΑΔΕΛΦΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ

† MDXLVI APRILIS XXI
DEPRECATIO SERVORUM DEI IOANNIS
MANESI ET FRATIS EIUS GEORGII⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Chatzidakis, *Icons de Saint-Georges*, pp. 21–22. The icon is also described in Maltezos, 'Stratioti': Protectors of the Frontiers, pp. 10–11.

⁸¹ In Byzantine art, the *Deïseis* represents Christ enthroned and flanked by the Virgin Mary on his right and John the Baptist on his left.

⁸² I am indebted to Pavlos Plessas for sharing his knowledge of *stratioto* livery and weaponry.

⁸³ Chatzidakis, *Icons de Saint-Georges*, p. 21. Traditionally the more important figure appeared on the 'privileged' side, that is, to the right of Christ (the viewer's left). In the main frame the kneeling, bearded figure is to the left (viewer's right) of Christ, whereas Zuane Manessi is on the right (viewer's left) of Christ, in the 'privileged' position. His younger brother Zorzi is kneeling on the (viewer's) right. I want to thank Blake de Maria for educating me on the intricacies of space and place and for taking the time to answer my many questions.

⁸⁴ '1546 April 21. The Deïseis of the servants of God Ioannis Manesi and His Brother Georgii.'



Figure 5.2: The Manessi Icon. Church of San Giorgio dei Greci. Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia. (Reproduced in colour on p. ix.)



Figure 5.3: The Mormori Icon. Museum of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Icons, Scuoletta di San Nicolò dei Greci. Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia. (Reproduced in colour on pp. x–xi.)

The second painting, ‘The Virgin in Glory and the Prophets’ (Η Παναγία εν δόξῃ και οι Προφῆτες), was commissioned by Zuane Mormori. The date of the painting is unknown, but Chatzidakis suggests the latter half of the sixteenth century.⁸⁵ The Mormori, originally from Napoli di Romania, were a large clan with Venetian and Cretan branches. There were two Zuane Mormoris in Venice in the middle to late sixteenth century. Little information exists about the first, Zuane di Nicolò. The second, Zuane d’Andrea, was a well-known copyist and scribe. As refugees in 1541, Zuane d’Andrea, his mother, and brother were awarded various offices in Venice and Verona.⁸⁶ Chatzidakis is convinced that Zuane d’Andrea was the donor because of the painting’s ‘beautifully written inscriptions, as well

⁸⁵ Chatzidakis, *Icons de Saint-Georges*, p. 26.

⁸⁶ ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 29, fol. 180v, 9 June 1548. The family earned ninety-six ducats a year from these offices.

as their irreproachable orthography', but he offers no further evidence to support this.⁸⁷ What we do know is that the donor was a person named Zuane Mormori and that his name appeared in the left hand inscription, 'to grant to Zuane Mormoris the pardon of his sins', and that he is the figure standing in profile at the (viewer's) far right of the painting, hands folded in prayer.⁸⁸

The final work is a gospel book with miniatures and a portrait of the owner-patron. The gospel book itself dates from mid-fourteenth-century Constantinople. It was illustrated in Venice in the latter half of the sixteenth century. The owner of the book employed two artists to add twenty miniature scenes from the New Testament in the margins, and the owner's portrait at the end of the book.⁸⁹ The gospel book belonged to Demetri di Teodoro Paleologo, from the well-known *stratioto* family. He appears in the last pages in profile, kneeling in prayer and dressed in the Venetian style (Figure 5.4; Plate 3). A Greek inscription to his left identifies him: Ο δούλος Χ(ριστο)υ του Θ(εο)υ Δημήτριος Παλαιολόγος ('The servant of Christ the Lord, Demetrio Paleologo').⁹⁰ Little else is known about the book's provenance. It may have been in the Paleologo family for generations. If that were the case then Demetri, as Teodoro Paleologo's only surviving son and heir, would have inherited it after his father's death in 1532.⁹¹ Demetri di Teodoro always identified himself as being 'da Costantinopoli', though no one else in the family, including his father, did so. Paleologo was the surname of the last Byzantine dynasty, and there may have been a link between the military and the imperial families.

Besides these donors, very few wealthy Greeks commissioned artwork, but their homes were filled with finery and art. They collected books, mainly religious works in Greek and Latin but also literary works, some very old, others recently published. The inventories of two householders show that the elite decorated their homes with fine fabrics, paintings, as well as figurines

⁸⁷ Chatzidakis has a description of the inscriptions: Chatzidakis, *Icons de Saint-Georges*, pp. 24–25.

⁸⁸ Neither Zuane d'Andrea Mormori nor his wife, Contarina Masorachi, refer to any paintings in their wills. Zuane Mormori's will is in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 1191, Galeazzo Secco, no. 321, 17 October 1590 (testament) and 28 February 1591 (mv), cedula. Contarina Masorachi's is in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 10, Gianpietro Anzelieri, no. 116, 20 December 1593.

⁸⁹ Information on the gospel book is from the catalogue of the exhibition *Byzantium: Faith and Power*, ed. by Evans, pp. 27–28. The miniatures are scattered throughout. Paleologo's portrait is on fol. 385v. The book, acquired by the Russians before 1848, is now in the National Library of Russia, St Petersburg.

⁹⁰ *Byzantium: Faith and Power*, ed. by Evans, p. 28.

⁹¹ There are no references to the gospel book in Demetri's will.



Figure 5.4:
Demetri di Teodoro
Paleologo. Detail from
the St. Petersburg Gospel
Book. Image courtesy of
the National Library of
Russia, St. Petersburg.
(Reproduced in colour
on p. xii.)

made from bronze, marble, and wood (walnut was very popular). The families were those of the Cypriot nobleman Eugenio Singlitico and the merchant Alessandro Ram. Singlitico owned extensive properties, including towns and hamlets in Cyprus, thanks to inheritance and the generosity of the Venetian state. He spent a great deal of his time in Venice, where he owned a house in Santa Marina parish. He died there on 15 June 1538 and was buried in the family tomb at Santa Croce. The inventory of his belongings was completed over three days: two of these were devoted to household contents (16–17 June), while the third day (19 June) was spent at the offices of the Exchequer (the *Camerlenghi*) where Singlitico kept his account books, his gold and silver, and his jewellery. Besides expensive furniture and furnishings, the inventory listed twenty-eight paintings ('quadri no. XXVIII') in the house, with no explanation as to their provenance.⁹²

⁹² ASV, *Cancellaria Inferiore*, Misc. Notai Diversi, b. 36, no. 61, unfoliated, 16–17 and 19 June 1538.

Alessandro Ram was a wealthy Constantinopolitan. He first came to Venice in the mid-1550s, and from then till his death in 1592 he divided his time between the two cities. His commercial interests were many, and he had dealings with large numbers of Venetian and Greek merchants. He did not speak Italian and relied on translators and interpreters; among his 'regulars' was the broker Francesco di Demetri Litino. Ram lived in a very large house in Santa Fosca parish. The inventory took over a week to complete. Among the home's furniture and furnishings were carved wooden chests, a large world map, numerous statues and statuettes in marble, wood and bronze, and forty-three paintings. The notary attributed one of these to Titian but offered no other information about it.⁹³ However, he did include brief descriptions of some of the others. Thirteen paintings had religious themes: the Madonna was the most popular, followed by portraits of the saints. Ram was partial to representations of people, from saints and ancient philosophers to portraits of strangers, friends, and his own family. His collection included four paintings of unnamed friends and one of 'a Venetian', another of 'a Turk', yet another of Ser Foscarini (without saying which Foscarini), a portrait of his grandfather, and several of himself.⁹⁴ Ram had no wife or children. His fortune and the contents of his house were sent to Diana and Camillo, his siblings in Constantinople.

* * *

When they gave and received awards, gifts, and patronage Greeks showed that they had 'integrated into Venetian society as their interests in other institutions indicated, and they remained outward looking as a community'.⁹⁵ The variety and scope of their gifts was another reflection of the community's complexity and adaptability. What then were the consequences of integration into a broader Venetian world? And how, after two or more generations, did one define what it meant to be a Greek? The many strands of Greekness and the multifaceted nature of identity are the two issues examined in the final chapter.

⁹³ ASV, *Cancellaria Inferiore*, Misc. Notai Diversi, b. 44, no. 9, fol. 3r, 1–10 November 1592.

⁹⁴ ASV, *Cancellaria Inferiore*, Misc. Notai Diversi, b. 44, no. 9, fols 2v, 3r, fol. 6r, 1–10 November 1592.

⁹⁵ Ball, 'Poverty, Charity and the Greek Community', p. 144.

DEFINING GREEKNESS

Identity is the social and personal constructs people create to define how they see themselves and how others see them. The Venetian patriciate spent much time, energy, and resources carefully creating an identity around itself in order to preserve its social, political, and economic power.¹ Faced with challenges to its authority at various times in the Republic's history, the patrician class cemented its hegemony by progressively redefining its special status. At times it did this to incorporate new members into its ranks, or to accommodate returning patrician families like Veneto-Cypriot and Veneto-Cretan nobility after these islands became Ottoman. At other times, it passed laws to ensure noble lines remained 'pure', that is, free from the taint of manual labour and illegitimacy. These were on-going endeavours, the aim of which was to define who could and who could not belong to this class. As Reinhold Mueller puts it, particularly from the fourteenth century on, 'defining who really was Venetian became a preoccupation of public policy'.² Despite all the measures they created to safeguard their positions in Venetian society, neither the patrician nor *cittadini originari* classes were moribund because they brought in new blood through out-marriage and with the incorporation of new families into their ranks.

Patricians and *cittadini originarii* defined themselves as unique. *Popolani* never did: they were simply those people who did not belong to either of the two privileged classes. Patrician and *cittadini originarii* identity was legislated: it had to be continually adjusted to accommodate changing times and

¹ On patrician identity, see Chojnacki, 'Identity and Ideology in Renaissance Venice' and 'Social Identity in Renaissance Venice'.

² Mueller, *The Venetian Money Market*, p. 256.

circumstances. This was not a problem for commoners, at least not in the sixteenth century; anyway, how does one legislate a class that included ‘everyone else’? The definition of the *popolani* class relied on factors such as occupation, residency, place of origin, and family; in other words, characteristics common to all three orders. The difference then between the first two orders and the *popolani* was privilege and the legislation that defined what that privilege was; no one talked of the privilege of being a *popolano*. But everyone, regardless of class, referred to the privilege of being Venetian, and it was this quality that bound the three orders together. Who, then, was a Venetian? In the simplest, narrowest of terms, a Venetian was someone born of a Venetian father regardless of whether he was patrician, *cittadino originaro*, or *popolano* born. Over time, the definition expanded to include people of Venetian parentage born in the subject territories.

Yet even this explanation is incomplete. Did it include people who worked in Venice for decades, acquired citizenship *de intus et extra* but then returned to their homelands? What about men who acquired Venetian citizenship even though they never lived in Venice? This practice, of bestowing a form of honorary citizenship on foreigners, was not unique to Venice or other states; Genoa, for example, did the same, and so did other countries and empires. There were ‘naturalized Venetians’ in the cities and towns of the Byzantine Empire, local men who spent their lives working almost exclusively with Venetian merchants. Politically and commercially powerful Byzantine nobility like the Notara held dual Genoese and Venetian citizenship that they passed down from father to son for three or more generations.³ When Anna Notara settled in Venice, she did so not only as a Byzantine noblewoman in exile but also as the daughter of a Venetian citizen. If a Venetian was someone born of a Venetian father, either in Venice or one of its territories, then most Greeks were not Venetians. However, they settled permanently in the city, and they had children born and raised there, so at some point did Greeks cease being just Greek and became Greek-speaking Venetians? Or simply Venetians? Or did they remain Greek? If nothing else, these questions highlight the difficulties of defining identity.

Throughout this book there has been a conversation about identity and community and what it might have meant to be a Greek in sixteenth-century Venice.⁴

³ Jacoby, ‘Les Vénitiens naturalisés dans l’Empire byzantin’; Matschke, ‘The Notaras Family and its Italian Connections’; Balletto, ‘Ethnic Groups, Cross-Social and Cross-Cultural Contacts’; Harris, ‘The Goudelis Family in Italy after the Fall of Constantinople’.

⁴ The subject has produced some very interesting literature: Harris, ‘Common Language and the Common Good’; McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, Chapters 2 and 4; O’Connell, ‘The

This chapter takes the discussion further. It consolidates the findings in the earlier chapters and analyses the data from the census and other sources to arrive at a definition of Greekness. It demonstrates the difficulties of defining identity by showing the many different ways people interpreted what it meant to be Greek. It examines identity from several perspectives, like the corporate, the political, and the personal. It analyses identity markers such as faith, language, class, occupation, and culture and asks how these contributed to an understanding of Greek identity. It addresses the issue of multiple Greek identities. Finally, it returns to the ideology of the Myth of Venice to illustrate the way Greeks, consciously or not, used elements of the Myth to explain their own place in a Venetian world.

The Census and Corporate Identity

The First Post-Tridentine Census

The census (*status animarum*) presents the most accurate estimate of the Christian population of the city at the end of the sixteenth century. The process was begun in 1592 and completed in 1594. The task became the responsibility of parish priests and their scribes, who were instructed to 'count all the souls' in the parish; that is, to go house to house and record peoples' names.⁵ Technically, this meant Latin rite (Catholic) souls, but Eastern (Greek) rite adherents were included throughout. Consequently, Greeks appear in every parish in the *sestiere* of Castello for which records exist. Counting methods differed from parish to parish, and it is this inconsistency of approach that creates difficulties for interpreting the data and defining identity. In most parishes scribes drew no distinctions between Latin and Greek rite adherents, making it almost impossible to identify Greek residents, regardless of rite. The census of Santa Maria Formosa parish is a good example of this approach.

For this reason, parishes using this method have been largely omitted from the discussion here. In San Martin and Sant' Antonin parishes Greek rite households were entered at the end of the census register, after all the Latin households had been recorded.

Venetian Patriciate in the Mediterranean'; Clark, *Twice a Stranger*; Fleming, *A Jewish History of Greece*; Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts*.

⁵ Most scribes included additional information such as occupation and the relationship between the head of the household and other people living in the house.

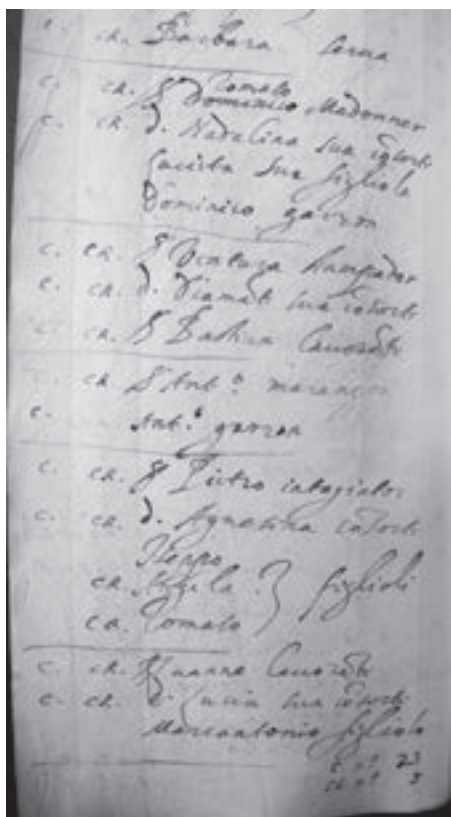


Figure 6.1: Extract from Census, Santa Maria Formosa, August 1593. Photo courtesy of Archivio della Curia Patriarcale di Venezia.

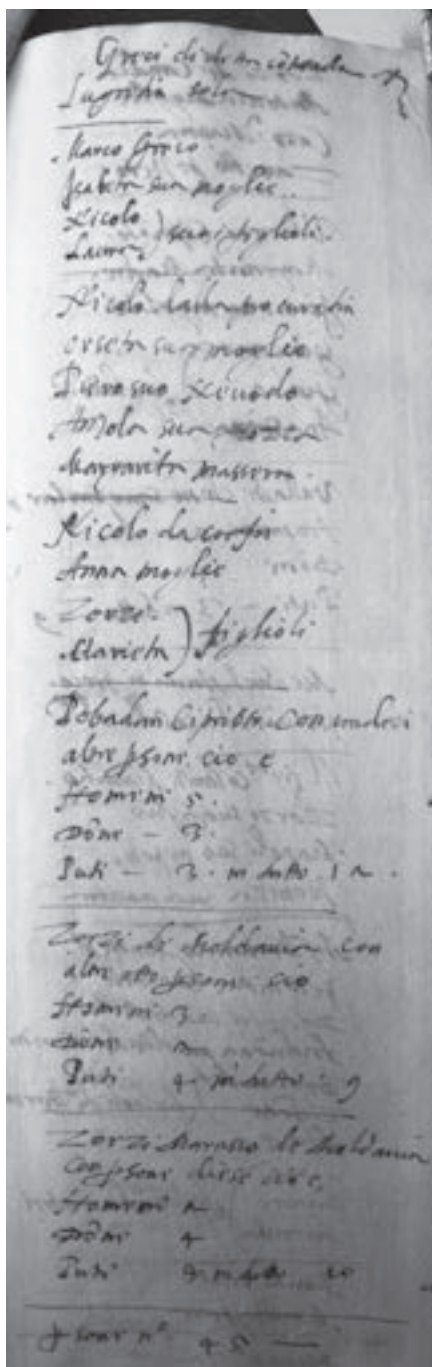


Figure 6.2:
Extract from Census, Sant' Antonin, 1592-93.
Photo courtesy of Archivio della Curia
Patriarcale di Venezia.

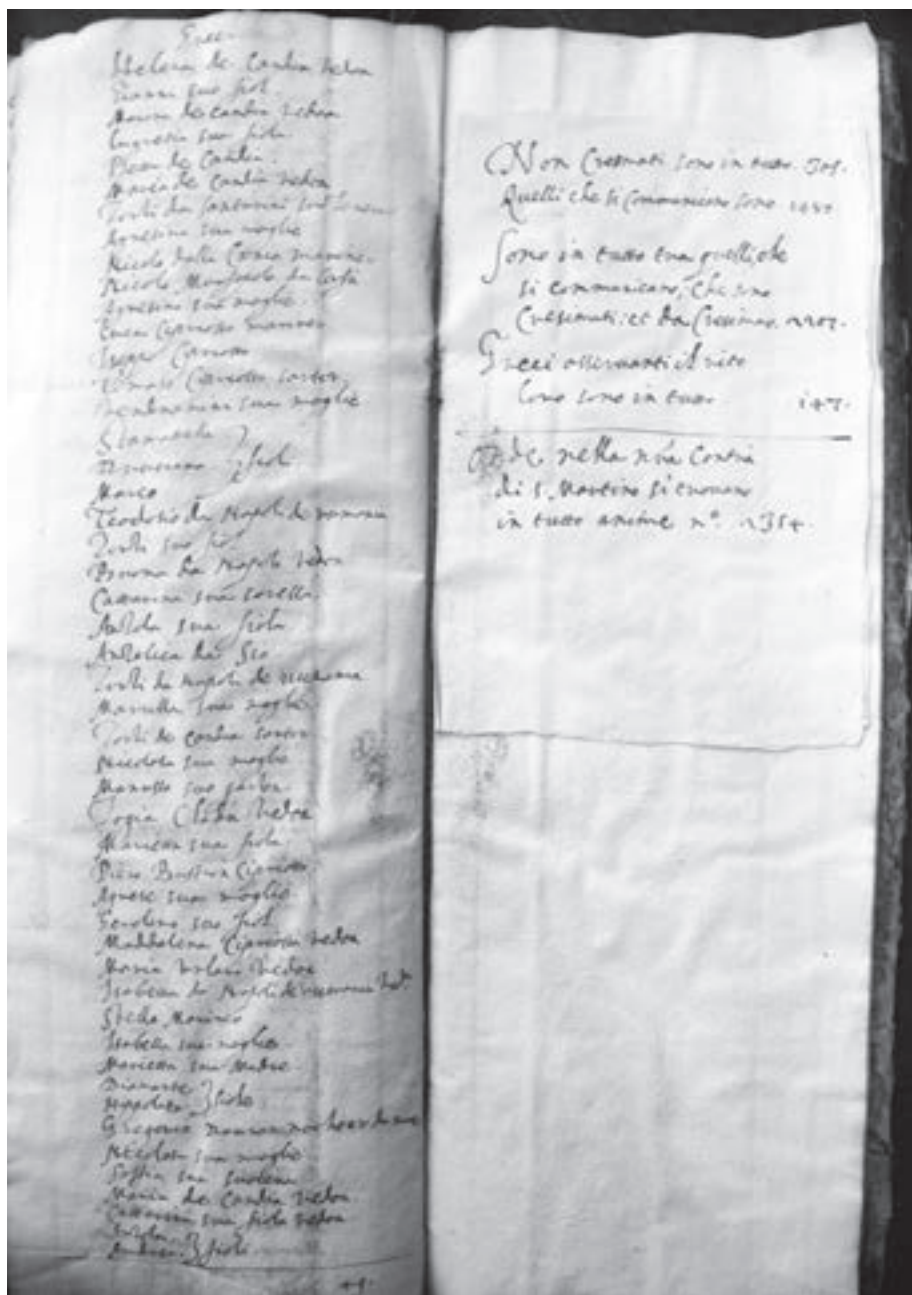


Figure 6.3: Extract from Census, San Martin, 9 April 1594.
Photo courtesy of Archivio della Curia Patriarcale di Venezia.

In Santa Trinità parish, however, all Greeks, whether Greek or Latin rite, were listed separately at the end of the census book (Fig. 6.4).

Otherwise, Greeks (of either rite) were included in the main body of the census, but those following the Greek rite were distinguished by a notation, a symbol, or in writing in the remaining parishes. In San Giovanni Nuovo scribes placed a hyphen (-) next to the names of Greek rite adherents, while at San Severo census takers wrote the phrase *ala greca* in the margins next to those adherents' names (Figs 6.5 and 6.6).⁶

No other Christian ethnic or subject community was singled out in the same manner as the Greeks. Most Dalmatians followed the Latin rite, so there was no need to distinguish them. Albanians were either Latin or Eastern rite, but the latter were not separated from the body of the census, at least not in Castello. The only hint regarding the ethnic origin of Dalmatians and Albanians was the inclusion of *Schiavoni* and *Albanese* after their names. Greeks however, were identified by ethnicity (*Greca/o*), faith (*ala greca*), by both, or not at all.⁷ The census, then, raises several questions about individual and collective identity. If a Greek was someone who espoused the Eastern rite, then what was a person of Greek parentage who followed the Latin rite? The many different ways of counting Greeks show that even religious authorities were unsure how to classify them: on the one hand, they were permanent settlers and Venetian subjects from the sea empire; on the other hand, their religious practices were suspect, at least to some. The different methods used to count Greek residents reveals considerable ambivalence on the part of parish priests and an absence of clear instructions from religious and political authorities, whose officials often appeared to be as confused as the census takers. Although they employed different ways for counting Greek residents, in the end parish scribes achieved what the census had intended, which was to see how many Christian inhabitants Venice had. In the process, they inadvertently highlighted the problems that arise when one group attempts to identify and to categorize another.

The most complete records of Greek rite residents are the Sant' Antonin and San Martin census books. In both of these parishes Greek rite households were

⁶ The scribes in San Provolo parish wrote *in rito greco* next to people's names. In Santa Maria Formosa, San Biagio, San Giuliano, and Santa Marina parishes scribes did not distinguish between Latin and Eastern rite adherents. All surviving books of the 1592–94 census for the *sestiere* of Castello have been consolidated into one busta: ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3.

⁷ Identification markers based on ethnic origin were common in the early modern period. Many people, especially those from the working classes, did not have surnames. In many cases the terms *Albanese*, *Schiavona/o*, and *Greca/o* began life as ethnic descriptors that later evolved into surnames.

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Figure 6.5: Extract from Census, San Giovanni Nuovo parish, 30 November 1593.
Photo courtesy of Archivio della Curia Patriarcale di Venezia.

[illegible]

Figure 6.6: Extract from Census, San Severo parish, October 1593.
Photo courtesy of Archivio della Curia Patriarcale di Venezia.

listed separately at the back of the book (Figures 6.2 and 6.3), while Latin rite Greeks appeared with their co-religionists in the register's main body. Clearly census takers in both parishes understood the term *Greci* to mean 'rite'.⁸ The inclusion of Andria Turco, a Muslim convert (*battizzato*), in the Greek section of the Sant' Antonin census reinforces the point that *Greca/o* denoted 'rite': Andria Turco was not ethnically Greek, whereas his wife, Stamatia was, since *battizzata* was not attached to her name. Sant' Antonin parish had 346 people who professed the Eastern rite.⁹ The term *Greca/o* was attached to the first names of fourteen of these people (ten men and four women), but in their cases it was probably meant to denote a surname of sorts.

San Martin parish scribes named all but five heads of households (out of a total of 147) by name and place of origin. The five exceptions were identified either by first name or by first name and surname. *Greca/o* or *Greci* was never used alongside a person's name. In fact, the only time the term *Greci* appeared was on the first page of the Greek section of the census (Figure 6.3), where the scribe clarified the religious status of the people he was separating from the rest of the residents of the parish. Latin rite Greeks appeared in the main body of the census, just as in Sant' Antonin. For the priests and scribes of both these parishes, then, *Greca/o* and *Greci* meant Eastern rite adherents.

All Greek households in Santa Trinità, regardless of rite, were listed at the end of that parish's census register. Scribes distinguished between Greek rite individuals and families (*greca* or *greco* or *alla greca*) from Latin rite ones (*alla franca*), but the census takers complicated matters by not providing every resident's religious affiliation. Fiorenza Giustiniana's rite was not given, but her children's was; one is left to assume (possibly erroneously) that like them she too was of the Latin rite. The situation of Cattarina, the widow of Nicolò the Greek, illustrates the fluid nature of rite and the absurdity of binding it to ethnicity. For whatever reasons, when Cattarina married Nicolò, she adopted the Greek rite. After he died, she returned to the Latin rite. Neither she nor the scribe seemed to have had a problem with this.¹⁰

⁸ Distinguishing Latin rite Greeks in the main (non-Greek rite) body of the census in Sant' Antonin and San Martin parishes was a frustrating task because scribes did not use ethnicity markers. Latin and Eastern rite Greeks shared names and homelands, and sometimes came from the same families. Popular first names like Demetri, Stamatia, and Marulla were common among Dalmatians and Albanians as well as Greeks.

⁹ ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 1, Sant' Antonin, unfoliated; 1592–93 census takers counted 340 souls whereas it should be 346.

¹⁰ ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 10, Santa Trinità, fol. 109v.

The Greeks in San Giovanni Nuovo and San Severo parishes were included in the main body of the census, but Eastern rite followers were distinguished from Latin adherents with a notation or the words *Greca/Greco* next to their names. On the last page of his parish's register, the priest at San Giovanni Nuovo wrote: 'Those who are Greeks (rite) are indicated by this mark - .'¹¹ The hyphen meant rite only, while the words *Greca/o* identified one's ethnic origin. For example, Zorzi the tailor, his wife Anna, and everyone else in their household were Greek rite. The Venetian Maria Zani rented rooms to Philippo, Grecho and Demetri, Grecho but neither man had a hyphen after his name. In their case *Grecho* denoted ethnicity.

San Severo was the only parish among the five with mixed rite households. The head of the Martinengo family, Bernardo, and his entire household were Greek rite, while his son's family and servants were Latin rite (see Figure 6.6).¹² For the census takers, then, *Greca/o* had two meanings: religious affiliation ('vivono alla greca') and ethnicity ('Il Magnifico messer Bernardo Martinengo, Greco'). For some reason, the scribes ignored both the ethnicity and the rite of several elite Greek parishioners. They may have known the Cypriot Michiel Membre was a Latin rite adherent since he was an important public figure and the state's chief *dragoman*. However, none of the Cuvli sisters (Betta, Ludovica and Gratosia) were identified as Greek rite, even though the Cuvli and their kin were well known throughout San Severo and nearby Sant' Antonin parishes. The women were members of San Nicolò dei Greci, attended services at San Giorgio dei Greci, and both Gratosia and Betta wanted to be buried in that church in the family tomb. All three women were also generous patrons of their parish church and attended mass there as well. Perhaps this latter point, as well as their status as wives of notable Venetians, influenced the scribe's decision to put them in the Latin column. Interestingly, the parish priest at Sant' Antonin was clear about the status of Lorenzo Cuvli, the women's brother. His household appeared in the Greek section of that parish's census.

¹¹ 'Greci li quelli sono signati con questo segno — come appar a suoi luoghi', ACPV, *Status animarum*, b. 3, filza 2, San Giovanni Nuovo, fol. 31r; census conducted 30 November 1593. This parish had forty-one Greek residents (twelve households): three Greek rite households with twenty-two people of that rite; two Latin rite households with six people of that rite; seven Venetian households with thirteen Greek tenants (seven Latin rite and six Greek rite).

¹² ACPV, *status animarum*, b. 3, filza 9, San Severo, unfoliated. There were probably more households like these. Mixed rite families were common, especially among Cypriot elites like the Flangini, Flangi, Podacataro, and Soderini.

The many different ways scribes counted Greeks in these five parishes suggests that instructions about how to define this minority were at best vague, at worst nonexistent; certainly they show that not even parish priests were not quite sure how to categorize their Greek parishioners. As a result, we have complex and often conflicting views of Greek identity, at least where rite is concerned. The confusion was because of their religious status, especially as that status was, even at the end of the century, open to interpretation. For example, some Venetian religious authorities still maintained they were schismatics (in the Greek view of course, it was the other way around), but the state disagreed. For official Venice, the term *Greci* meant ethnicity *and* rite; in other words, one did not have to be an ethnic Greek to be a Greek rite adherent, or a Greek rite adherent to be an ethnic Greek. If nothing else, the census highlights the difficulty, or more appropriately, the futility of categorizing large groups of people, at least in the early modern period.

Corporate Identity

The census throws up many issues concerning identity, especially about how to accommodate people 'who are not like us'. The majority of Castello parishes, like Santa Maria Formosa, chose to ignore the issue, while five struggled to solve it. Interestingly, no other parish records separated Greeks from the rest of the population; for example, there are no separate 'Greek pages' of death and marriage registers. The term *Greca/o* was a marker of ethnic and/or religious identity in much the same way that occupation described someone with a particular craft. Collectively Greeks used the expression 'of the Greek nation' (*di nation Greca*) in reference to their community, its institutions, and to themselves as a group. This *nation* had shared traditions, customs, and language that were different from other peoples'; in the sixteenth century, it certainly did not denote national identity. The following abbreviated extract from Sanuto illustrates the versatility of the term. Sanuto describes the funeral of the wife of the *capo dei stratioti* Mercurio Bua in San Biagio in 1524:

Today was the burial of the wife of Mercurio Bua [...] who was of the Greek nation [ethnicity], of the Bocali and died here [...] she was carried on foot [...] from San Marco to San Biagio, where the service was officiated in the Greek rite [religious affiliation], she was accompanied by her own and Greeks [her family and compatriots] [...] and then with Greek ceremonies she was buried.¹³

¹³ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, xxxvi, 466, 7 July 1524. The full quotation reads: 'In questo zorno,

Later, at the funeral of Teodoro Paleologo, Sanuto again describes Greek funeral customs (*cerimonie greche*), but in that instance he is referring to dress, not ritual.¹⁴ Words and expressions changed meaning according to context, and terms such as *Greca/o* and *Greci* had several different meanings: ethnicity, language, rite, custom, ceremony, family, community, and manner and dress.¹⁵

The religious status of Greeks and Greco-Venetian ambivalence towards religious differences has made categorization difficult, at least for modern historians. Most Greeks professed the Eastern rite and favoured San Giorgio dei Greci; at the same time, as individuals and as a community, they participated in the religious and civic life of the city through their parishes, neighbourhoods, guilds, and *scuole*. Perhaps in the past notions of identity did not occupy people's minds to the extent or in the manner they do today. The state certainly looked favourably on Greeks and defended them from those who would do them harm. The incidents described in the long passage below took place in 1596 during Lent. A Dominican preacher speaking in Santi Giovanni e Paolo insulted the Greeks, who then took their grievances to the authorities. The papal nuncio was a witness to the events and reported them to Rome. He was particularly surprised at the Signoria's displeasure with the preacher:

The other day one of the Dominicans [...] expounded the views of Luther on Purgatory [...]. In the course of this he mixed up the Greeks with Luther and ended by launching into a tirade in which he proclaimed his wish to have all the Greeks of Venice listening to his sermon, that they might be confounded and might come to know the Catholic truth in the matter of Purgatory. Certain Greeks who were

da poi disnar fo portà a sepelir la mojer del conte Mercurio Bua condutier nostro, la qual era di nation greca, di Bocali, et morite in questa terra, et con grandissimo honor di congregation 5, capitoli do, iesuati 32, lei vestita d'oro con zoie e cadene et [...] assai, per la piazza di San Marco per terra portata a San Biagio, dove si officia a la greca, accompagnata da soi e grechi. Dove feno in chiesia li pianti, et ivi con le cerimonie greche fo sepelita in uno deposito. Ha lassato uno fiol di anni [...] nominato Flavio.' The ellipses in the original transcription are the editors'.

¹⁴ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, LVI, 878.

¹⁵ Another term that meant Greek was *Romaic* (adjective) or *Romniā/os* (noun), but these words were exclusively used by Byzantines in reference to themselves, their institutions, and their empire, which was officially the (Eastern) Roman Empire. Anna Notara, the Byzantine noblewoman who left a legacy for a Greek rite church in Venice, referred to it as a 'Romaic church' not a 'chiesa greca'. *Romaic* referred to the faith, its ceremonies and language, which were all informed by Byzantium. The terms *Romaic* and *Romnoi* survived the fall of Constantinople and were adopted by the Ottomans in reference to the Orthodox patriarch of Constantinople and to Greeks living in the city. In Turkey and Greece today, variations of this term are still in use. Until the nineteenth century, the term *Hellenes* was not used in Greece because of its pagan connotations.

present began to protest among themselves at the end of the sermon, and there was some whispering in the audience, but the commotion among the Greeks grew to the point at which large numbers of them rushed off excitedly to the *Collegio* to lodge a serious complaint with the doge and the Signoria concerning those words which the preacher had uttered against them. On hearing of the fuss they were making, the preacher offended them still further the following day when from his pulpit he begged God to convert them. The lords of Venice, who have for many reasons of their own a great interest in keeping the Greeks content, showed great displeasure at the preacher's behaviour, and after calming the Greeks down they sent to ask the father what he had said against them. He replied that he had said he would have wished to have all the Greeks at his sermon, in order to strengthen their belief in Purgatory. My lords, on being told that he had said this to confound the Greeks, and had named them together with the heretics, ordered him to abstain from preaching because they wanted him to withdraw the words that had offended the Greeks, and they desired him to say the following words from the pulpit;

Preaching the sermon on Purgatory, I said, 'O God, would that I had before me all the Greeks in Venice, to strengthen their belief in Purgatory'. Gentlemen, I declare publicly that I meant no disrespect to this Catholic nation, and I have always most firmly held that they believe in Purgatory even as we do ourselves, and I said these words in all innocence. Since I now know that these remarks have given scandal to the Greek nation, as I never wished or intended, I would happily shed my blood if only I could undo it, and if the Greek nation has been offended I beg pardon of God and of every single one of them.

The father reported that he had said these words in the pulpit, except for those underlined, which he admitted to having withheld.¹⁶

The nuncio then went on to express his astonishment at the extraordinary interference of the state in a matter that was clearly under ecclesiastical jurisdiction:

I have complained to many people in private (and I know that my remarks have been reported to their lordships) of their [lordships] readiness to interfere with the authority of the Church. I shall complain to the *Collegio* too, although the Father Inquisitor and others acquainted with local custom tell me that this is the way the Venetians do things, and repeat many stories of preachers who, because they spoke of the Greeks or commented on matters of state, have been forced to withdraw their words, or to give up preaching and themselves withdraw from Venice.¹⁷

¹⁶ The papal nuncio at the time was Monsignor Gratiani, bishop of Amelia. The original document is in the ASVat., DN, filza 2, fols 251r–252v, 13 April 1596. The passage appears in *Venice: A Documentary History*, ed. by Chambers and Pullan, pp. 336–337.

¹⁷ *Venice: A Documentary History*, ed. by Chambers and Pullan, p. 337.

The papal nuncio did not question the Greeks' presence at a Lenten sermon. Attendance at sermons was a popular activity that everyone enjoyed, especially during Lent, and even more so if the preacher was an excellent speaker. The Greeks were enthusiastic advocates of the tradition, and as preachers could not speak in San Giorgio dei Greci, Greeks went to hear them in Latin churches. What surprised the nuncio was the attitude of the authorities and how readily local churchmen accepted political interference in church affairs. He probably did not appreciate how much Greeks were part of Venetian society, so that to insult them was to insult the city itself. He also failed to grasp how greatly the preacher's words insulted all Greeks, not just those attending church that particular day.

For their part the authorities did not see the incident as a few individuals complaining about some wayward preacher but a community grievance which had to be addressed.¹⁸ And the sooner the better. Greeks were subjects of the *Serenissima* and enjoyed the rights that status entailed. The state was obliged to defend them just as they defended its interests. It was not interested in aggravating a substantial proportion of the population. Venetian authorities prided themselves on saving the Republic from the social and political upheavals that had plagued so many of their neighbours in earlier times. Therefore, they were not prepared to sanction the prejudices of a Lenten preacher regardless of who they were directed at.

Officially the Greeks were a community of immigrants from the *Stato da Mar*, now integrated into the polyglot that was Venice. Some religious authorities held a stricter interpretation based on rite only. Other religious and secular authorities adopted a more fluid view, defining Greeks by their language and their *patrie*. In the end the Greek community was just one more of the many corporate bodies that made up Venetian society.¹⁹ In reality, Venetians and Greeks needed each other. While the tradition of tolerating subject peoples, 'infidels' (Jews and Muslims) and 'heretics' (Protestants), was viewed with suspicion by outsiders and churchmen, secular authorities saw matters differently.

¹⁸ For the many interpretations of community, see Muir, 'The Idea of Community in Renaissance Italy'.

¹⁹ Venetian tolerance extended to other minorities. For example, Zorattini's work focuses on the cooperation between Christians and Jews in the sixteenth century: 'Generally the Venetian Holy Office was lenient toward the Jews, an attitude that may be explained by the Venetian government's traditional policy of putting the needs of the state first, even if they clashed with the prerogatives and freedom of action of the Catholic Church'; Zorattini, 'Jews, Crypto-Jews, and the Inquisition', p. 104.

They accepted those who had made positive contributions to the well-being of the Republic through their commercial and other activities and by the services they provided.

Personal Identity

If Venetians identified Greeks by faith, language, customs, and ethnicity, and referred to them collectively as *Greci*, how did Greeks identify themselves? For a start, they never used the term *Greci* except when speaking as a community, like in their petitions for a *scuola* and church, or in their grievances with the Dominican preacher. Otherwise, they used personal identifiers to say who they were, who they belonged to, where they originally came from, and where they now lived. No Greek said '*sono Greca/o*' by way of introducing themselves; the notion of personal Greekness was implied rather than stated. Like Venetians, Greeks identified themselves primarily by family name, mostly through the male parent but in a few instances through the female as well. The majority of men stated their own and often their fathers' occupations. This immediately established both social status and occupational identity. The rite they followed was never part of an introduction. That kind of information was gleaned from their bequests, their preferred burial place, and from other public sources such as the census.

Women announced who they were by name and surname (if they had one) and then many also cited their father's name and occupation. Married women tended to use their maiden surname (if there was one), followed by the spouse's name and occupation. Establishing one's family of birth sometimes had priority, other times not. Generally, there were no hard and fast rules about how people presented themselves. Maria Prothimo made three wills between November 1537 and August 1538 and identified herself in a different manner each time: in the first, she was 'Maria Paleologina, survivor of the late nobleman Lord Antonio Prothimo of Negroponte and presently living in the parish of San Martin'; in the second, she included her father, 'I, Maria Prothimo, daughter of the late messer Thomaso Paleologo and survivor of the late messer Antonio Prothimo of the parish of San Biagio'; a few months later, when Prothimo made her final will she was 'Maria Paleologo, survivor of the late signor messer Antonio Prothimo, signor of Castri'. The introductions to each of her wills revealed more information about Maria. She belonged to a branch of the noble Paleologo clan. Her husband was noble too, descendant from one of the most elite Negropontian families; after the fall of Negroponte in 1470, he was given a fief at Castri, probably as compensation for the family's losses. References to

her niece Moysa Gudelli in all three of Maria's wills established her high standing further, for the Gudelli were also Byzantine nobility. Coincidentally, the wills also contain information about Prothimo's movements during the nine-month period between November 1537 and August 1538: in that short time Prothimo used three different notaries and moved house three times, though she did not say why.²⁰ Maria Paleologina Prothimo was a Byzantine noblewoman from a Constantinopolitan family, married to a distinguished Negropontian notable. Her social circle of Venetian patricians and Byzantine nobility reflected her high status. She was a *Romaia* (a Byzantine) with deep roots in the old empire. She spoke Greek, and she followed the Greek rite, but her historical, cultural, and family roots were in Byzantium.²¹

Name immediately identified a person and their family. Place of origin (*patria*), which many added after their names, defined one's roots, a custom that is still practised in Greece. These roots were family, tradition, custom, homeland, local history, and a shared political culture as subjects of the *Serenissima*. This last quality distinguished Greeks from 'others' in Venice, such as the Germans, Florentines, Milanese, and Greeks from the Ottoman and other territories. It implied rights, duties, and benefits that outsiders, including Greek outsiders, did not have ready access to: commercial privileges, the courts, and public offices in Venice and its territories. Despite the common background, there were many differences among Greeks, and these often gave rise to serious tensions which had to be resolved for the good of the community. The ratio between voluntary immigrants to refugees, for example, was fairly even, but it did not guarantee peaceful coexistence. Unlike voluntary immigrants, first-generation refugees tended to rely on their compatriots for support and companionship for a longer period. They were more likely to ask for and receive benefits and privileges from the state; as we saw in the previous chapter, Naupliots and Monemvasians enjoyed far greater privileges than other refugees. We do not know how voluntary immigrants felt about the special relationship between refugees and the state. While there is no direct evidence to say that

²⁰ The Prothimo of Negroponte had close ties to the Venetian administration of the island, and they were rewarded with lands, titles, and other privileges. Maria did not say which Castri Prothimo had acquired (several places in southern Greece shared the name). I want to thank Thierry Ganchou for information on the Prothimo and Maria's branch of the Paleologo and the Gudelli families. Maria's wills are in ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 126, Francesco Bianco, no. 595, 25 November 1537; ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 302, 26 March 1538; and ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 578, Nicolò Licino, no. 290, 28 August 1538.

²¹ For Paleologo-Prothimo and other Byzantine elites living in Venice, see Burke, 'Surviving Exile'.

they were seriously unhappy or envious, there were certainly tensions in the community between the two groups. For example, people from the smaller territories complained of being ignored or marginalized at *scuola* meetings. This was why community leaders eventually legislated to prevent any one regional group from dominating *scuola* offices.²²

Greeks never lived in a separate world. They were fully integrated into Venetian life through their work, their social contacts, neighbourhoods, and parishes. Because they did not live in exclusive neighbourhoods, they were residents, workers, neighbours, and friends — that is, locals who happened to be Greek. The parish had its own history and popular traditions, just as neighbourhoods had distinctive idiosyncrasies. It is no wonder then that many gave their address when they entered into a contract, composed a petition, or made a will; they were identifying themselves as belonging to a particular place. The notary Gianpietro Anzelieri recorded most of his clients' parishes, street names, and immediate neighbourhoods, one of the few notaries to do so. Anzelieri's attention to detail proved that for Greeks, proximity to their compatriots was not a factor in their choice of home.

Language is an important marker of identity, and as Greek was the native language of Greek immigrants, it set them apart from everyone else. Whether or not many had Italian before emigrating to Venice is difficult to say, but given that most came from seafaring urban centres and had frequent contact with Venetians, they would have had some understanding of that language. More women than men spoke only Greek, probably because fewer Greek women had direct contacts with Venetians in their homelands but also in Venice. Consequently, more women than men needed interpreters to help them draw up formal documents or communicate with a public official. It is safe to say that first- and second-generation immigrants adopted basic Italian, while Greek remained their first language, but it is impossible to say what happened to language afterwards. Immigration slowed after 1571 and did not pick up again until the fall of Crete in the middle of the seventeenth century; therefore, language was not as open to change, to adopting to new words and expressions, because it was not being renewed through the arrival of large numbers of new settlers. It did not disappear, however; instead, it evolved, as all languages do, with more Venetian words entering Greek.²³ The church and the *scuola* were

²² Antoniadi, 'The Book of Prayers of Saint George of the Greeks', p. 1257.

²³ Today, some 220 years after the last Venetian left their shores, the Greek spoken by Ionian Islanders retains a distinctive dialect and rhythm that is more Italian than Greek.

instrumental in language retention. The mass in San Giorgio dei Greci was said in medieval Greek, but that was not radically different from formal spoken Greek. The language of *scuola* meetings was probably in Greek, but the statutes, account books, and minutes of those meetings had to be in Italian because public officials responsible for overseeing all *scuole* had to be able to read the proceedings. Therefore, *scuola* officials and in particular scribes had to be fluent in both languages. The establishment of a Greek school in the early part of the seventeenth century further facilitated the dissemination of language, at least to the privileged few who could afford to send their sons there to be educated.

After 1571 language renewal and development relied more on the frequent contact of mariners, merchants, and others with Greek-speaking territories in the *Stato da Mar*, the Ottoman Empire, Greek communities in other parts of Italy, Sicily, and ports beyond the Mediterranean basin. Women and men continued to travel to their homelands, including those now under Ottoman control, to visit family and friends, conduct business, and go on pilgrimages. It does not necessarily follow that the loosening of an identity marker such as language meant the abandonment of older cultural values, particularly since institutions that reinforced culture and language already existed in Venice but in an altered form.²⁴ Greek remained the language of the home, the family, and its kin and friends. It distinguished Greeks from other subject people, while a

²⁴ My own experience of growing up Greek in a non-Greek environment comes from my hometown of Seattle, Washington. By the 1950s Seattle had an old, well-established Greek community served by two churches. These were not only houses of worship but also the nuclei of the community. Many of Seattle's Greeks had immigrated in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and by mid-century they had become almost completely Americanized. By the late 1950s, then, there were many who did not speak Greek with any degree of fluency, but this did not affect their participation in the rituals of the faith, the retention of customs, or in the administration of the churches and their charities. That is, they never ceased being Greek, even though they no longer spoke the language fluently. It came as quite a shock to me when in 1962 my parents and I visited New York City for the first time. Ordered by my grandparents to look up some relatives 'somewhere in Astoria' (at the time predominantly settled by Greeks), we found ourselves in a very different world from our own. We were surprised to hear Greek spoken publicly in shops and on the streets. We were even more surprised to learn that there were Greeks living in Astoria who spoke no English, which was almost unheard of in Seattle. I do not think Seattle's Greek community was any less Greek than New York City's. The latter was a far larger community, since New York was the first port of call for thousands of immigrants, many of whom chose to stay there. Therefore, it was probably easier to retain language in New York than in Seattle. Even so, the Greek spoken in Astoria contained a large number of English words and phrases and many Hellenized English words.

knowledge of Italian along with long-term residency, work, and social interaction gave them entry into Venetian society.

The integration into the host society was not one-sided. The *scuola* and the church welcomed non-Greeks, but unless they had some connection to the community or the rite, there were few reasons for non-Greeks to join. Several people, all Eastern rite followers, became *scuola* members and attended church at San Giorgio dei Greci; these were mainly Serbs and a handful of Dalmatians.²⁵ Very few Venetians attended the Greek church except on special occasions, but a small number of them with Greek connections became *scuola* members. The most prominent was the patrician Pietro Manolesso, whose wife, Gratosia Cuvli, was Greek. Manolesso may have been born in Crete; he certainly spent a good part of his youth there, spoke Greek well, and owned property on the island.²⁶ He first joined the *scuola* in 1578, six years before he and Gratosia married, and again from 1599 to 1606.²⁷ Perhaps he did so because of his background and eventual marriage. He was not the only one to do this. Andriana da Venezia, the Dalmatian woman whose two husbands were Greek, was a member and asked to be buried in the Greek cemetery. Andriana Paleologo's husband, the patrician Sebastian Trevisan, visited the *scuola* regularly to pay his wife's dues and leave monetary gifts she regularly made to the church; he was also good friends with several of its officials. The *scuola* was also open to both permanent and temporary residents, so it was normal for visitors to become members during their stay in the city. Giacomo Malici da Corfu was a member for two periods, from 1518 to 1520 and again from 1524 to 1528, when business and his 'other' family brought him to Venice. During the latter visit, he was elected to the board twice, in 1527 and again in 1528.²⁸ A few *capi*

²⁵ Pardos found two Serb members in the *scuola*'s first register; Mavroidi found twenty-five. Pardos, 'Alphabetical Catalogue of the First Members, Part A', p. 345; Mavroidi, *A Contribution to the History of the Greek Confraternity*, pp. 68–69 and 178.

²⁶ There were Manolesso in Crete from at least the early fourteenth century: McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, pp. 47, 158, 179, 182. Pietro Manolesso had to sell his property in Crete as part of the dowry settlement between himself and Gratosia's father: Burke, 'Our Daughters and Our Future', pp. 182–86. The dowry agreement between Manolesso and Cuvli is in AAIEV, *Testamenti, Legati, Commisarie e Donazioni*, no. 9b, fasc. 2, doc. 1, fol. 1r–v.

²⁷ Manolesso's name appears in the men's section of the register for the years 1599–1606. The 1578 entry is under the letter P in the women's section of the register: AAIEV, *Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci*, reg. 134, fols 167v and 347r.

²⁸ Malici's membership is in Pardos, 'Alphabetical Catalogue of the First Members, Part A', p. 356. The offices he held are in Mavroidi, 'The First Presidents of of the Greek Brotherhood of Venice'.

dei stratioti became members, even though their work kept them elsewhere for long periods of time.²⁹

The *scuola* was a corporate body, but it was also an association of all Greeks as well as some non-Greeks with Greek connections. Latin rite Greeks became *scuola* members, serving in the offices and working diligently to raise money for the construction of the church and in support of the charitable works San Nicolò undertook. Prominent Latin rite members and office-holders included the surgeon Manoli Alemanno and the Corfiot nobleman and scholar Antonio Eparcho. The participation in these activities by Greeks from diverse geographic and religious backgrounds serves to confirm that religious differences and diverse *patrie* did not hinder cooperation, nor did they lead to serious identity issues between Latin and Eastern rite Greeks. The same Demetri di Napoli di Romania who wanted to be buried in his parish church of San Domenego di Castello was a member of the Greek *scuola* in 1575.³⁰ Demetri di Salonichio blended his Venetian and Greek worlds through his generous gifts to religious houses serving both rites. He was a member of the Greek *scuola* and held the position of *gastaldo* three times, in 1509 and again in 1521 and 1522. Like all Venetian *scuole*, San Nicolò neither demanded adherence to one rite nor did it exclude people from cities and islands beyond Venice and her empire. Among its membership were women and men from the Venetian and Italian mainland, Constantinople, Trebizond, the Aegean islands, Wallachia, and other places. In this way, San Nicolò and San Giorgio were meeting houses for all Greeks and even a few 'almost Greeks'.

Identity is difficult to define because people do not fit into neatly constructed boxes. Venetian Greeks were as complex as everyone else, and as soon as anyone attempts to categorize them, exceptions appear. All Greeks spoke Greek and most were followers of the Greek rite. Did that mean people who spoke Greek and followed the Latin rite had to be called something else? Obviously not. Many Greeks came from Greek-speaking colonies that had fallen to the Ottomans. Did that make them 'less Greek' than those whose homelands remained blissfully under the protection of the *Serenissima*? The

²⁹ Military families enrolled in the *scuola* included the Manessi, Paleologo, and the Chelmi. Enlisted men hardly ever joined because their duties kept them elsewhere; other *capi dei stratioti* enrolled for short periods only. For example, Zuane Snati and his son were members from 1501 to 1508: Pardos, 'Alphabetical Catalogue of the First Members, Part A', pp. 371–72. Eugenio Lascari Megaduca was a member in 1575 and 1578–1579: AAIEV, reg. 134, *Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci*, fols 61r, 243v.

³⁰ AAIEV, *Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci*, reg. 134, fol. 47v.

most consistent markers of identity, the ones applying to all of Venice's Greeks, were family and kin, ethnicity, language, faith (as opposed to rite), and a common Venetian political heritage. These qualities distinguished Venetian Greeks from foreigners and other Greeks.

Views of the Serenissima

Professions of loyalty and the recollection of years of service to the Republic have already been discussed in the previous chapter. What stands out in these declarations is the way language was used to reinforce shared sentiments and ideas between Venice and its people: tolerance, justice, even-handedness, order, and serenity — in short, the Myth of Venice. Petitioners went to great lengths to convince officials they were worthy recipients of the state's largesse given that the purpose of the exercise was to win concessions. Not surprisingly such profound statements seldom appeared in private documents. How is it possible then to know what Greeks thought of Venice and how they defined their place in Venetian society?

Earlier historical interpretations of identity within the confines of nationality, as opposed to ethnicity, language, and rite, produced an exclusive definition about who was and who was not Greek. However, Greekness — the idea of being Greek — was a complex notion. The term encompassed customs, different rites, attitudes, traditions, and strong ties to *patria*, an idea and a place that in the early modern period was almost as important as family. Another identity marker, common political heritage, distinguished the Greeks of the *Stato da Mar* from other Greeks. Hundreds of years of imperial rule had a significant impact on the Republic's Greek subjects. Like other imperial powers, Venetian rule was benign and ruthless, organized and disorganized. Venetians enjoyed the benefits of empire but were loathe to spend money on personnel and maintenance. Sometimes the state posted officials whose incompetence, arrogance, and corruption only served to antagonize the local populace to the point of rebellion.³¹ The state was notoriously slack about paying wages to its fighting men who risked their lives in its defence; unsurprisingly, *stratioti* often threatened to abandon their posts or defect if they did not receive wages owed.³² Officials ignored rettors' complaints about the conditions of fortresses,

³¹ The incompetence and/or corruption of some colonial administrators led to revolts in Dalmatia and Crete in the early sixteenth century: O'Connell, *Men of Empire*, pp. 140–60.

³² Sanuto, *I Diarii*, ix, 542.

roads, and bridges in the *Stato da Mar*. For example, by May 1532 the fortifications at Napoli di Romania were almost beyond repair. The walls and the castle were old and in desperate need of work; in their present condition, the *bailo* reported, the city would not be able to withstand an attack.³³

History is full of stories about imperial powers that gave with one hand and took with the other, and the Republic was no exception. Regardless of the political odour of the Venetian administration in their particular *patria*, many Greeks saw Venetian rule as offering opportunities and protection to themselves, their families, and their homeland. Positive memories of the *patria* before the Ottomans were deeply held, especially among Naupliots and Monemvasians, and passed on from generation to generation. With the fall of Napoli di Romania, Vincenzo Argitti was 'deprived of my dear and sweet homeland'.³⁴ Elena Apostoli expressed her gratitude for the state's generosity towards 'those of its most loyal ones [the Naupliots]' and referred to Napoli di Romania, now under Ottoman rule, as the 'unfortunate city'.³⁵ Stamati Zachona and Stamati Corogona described in doleful terms the Ottoman takeover of their native Monemvasia: 'the time of the pitiful delivery of the unhappy city of Malvasia [Monemvasia]' (Zachona) and 'my unhappy city and homeland' (Corogona).³⁶

Gregorio Cuscutelli had no first-hand knowledge of the events of 1540–41. But the Venice-born youngest son of Canachi Cuscutelli di Napoli di Romania was well versed in the family's historical ties to the *Serenissima*. The connection went back to the early days of the previous century. Gregorio's great-grandfather, Ianni, had worked on the galleys for many years, but by 1404 he was

³³ Sanuto, *I Diarii*, LVI, 168–170; 416–417. Sanuto quotes from the report of Vettor Diedo, *bailo* at Napoli di Romania in May 1532. The report includes assessments of the city's fortifications, those of its surrounding towns, and the loyalty (or not) of local Greeks and Albanians. A further report issued a month later by Alvise Contarini, the new *bailo*, and Marco Moro, his councillor, only serves to confirm Diedo's findings. No effort was made to address these issues until it was too late.

³⁴ 'privo della mia cara et dolce patria': ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 1, fol. 28r, 7 February 1563.

³⁵ 'Per la solita benignità di questo Illustrissimo Dominio usata verso tutti quelli suoi fidelissimi che lassiorno beni propii nella infelice città di Napoli di Romania': ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 6, fol. 278r, 7 April 1579.

³⁶ Zachona: 'nel tempo della lacrimabil consignatione della infelice Città di Malvasia': ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 7, fol. 187r, 20 May 1583. Stamati Corogona expressed similar sentiments: 'mia infelice città et patria': ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 2, fol. 85r, 11 October 1566.

old and unable to serve. The state awarded him a vineyard, a licence to build a windmill on the island of Santo Abbato, and permission to leave these gifts to his heirs. This was how Gregorio's father inherited these concessions. Gregorio learned from his parents and brothers that when Napoli di Romania was under Venetian rule, its inhabitants 'lived in the shade of Your Serenity'. Canachi loyally served on the galleys and fought in the 1540 war but was captured, enslaved, and carried off to Constantinople. Eventually, he was ransomed for 450 ducats. By 1548 he was in Venice where his wife and three sons, Stamati, Zuane, and Manoli, had taken refuge. The Senate awarded him twelve ducats a year as compensation for the family's loss of their Naupliot concessions and the right to pass this gift to the sons after Canachi's death. Gregorio said the family was poor (despite generous concessions) and that Canachi had very little to leave him except 'an ardent desire to serve [the Republic]'.³⁷ The Cuscutelli story is not in itself unique: there were many others like it. What makes it stand out is the way Gregorio, born after 1548, absorbed the family narrative and made it his own. Thirty-two years later he would recall it to support his request for a broker's licence. In the process Cuscutelli illustrated how history and memory continuously informed perceptions of the *Serenissima*.

Favourable views of the Republic were not the sole preserve of refugees. Dimo Politi, a soldier from Corfu, described Venice as 'a most regal and Christian republic', which he and his two brothers loyally served. They had spilled their blood 'to maintain and exalt the faith in Christ and to sustain the greatness of this most Catholic republic'.³⁸ Similar expressions and sentiments of loyalty are the centrepiece of the introduction to the *mariegola* of the Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci: '[We] the Greeks are at all times good subjects, and loyal servants of this Most Holy State, and are exercised at every opportunity to the needs of Your Serenity, so on land as on the sea.'³⁹ Native and subject

³⁷ ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 6, fol. 352r, 12 August 1580. The 1548 award to Canachi Cuscutelli and his sons is in ASV, *Senato da Mar*, reg. 30, fol. 17r, 10 November 1548.

³⁸ ASV, *Collegio*, risposte di dentro, filza 6, fol. 263r, 2 January 1577: 'di questa egalatissima et Christianissima Republica [...] et spazendo il sangue con doi miei poveri fratelli [...] per mantener et essaltar la fede di Christo, et sustender la grandezza di questa Chatolichissima Republica.' Both of Politi's brothers died at Lepanto in 1571.

³⁹ AAIEV, *Mariegola Vecchia*, reg. 219, fol. 27r: 'i Greci siamo in ogni tempo stadi boni, et fidelissimi servitori de questo Sanctissimo Stado, et exercitadi in ogni opportunità ai bisogni della Serenità Vostra, sì da terra, come da mare.' The *mariegole* were leather bound books that contained election records, executive council decisions, and the *scuola's catasto*. All *scuole* had to keep *mariegole*. When asked, officials had to submit them to the officers of the *Provveditori di Comune* and the *Giustizia Vecchia*. The state kept a close watch on all corporate bodies, not just *scuole*.

Venetians were obligated to defend the state, and in turn it was obliged to provide security and protection from internal and external enemies. The words Greeks used to describe their relationship to Venice reflected these mutual obligations and benefits. There was also nostalgia and a homesickness for the *patria* in its Venetian days. It was as if time had forgiven the injustices, heavy burdens, and incompetence of Venetian rule.

Such views reflected a longing for a homeland that no longer existed — if it ever had. They were passed down from parents to children, who, like Gregorio Cuscuteelli, repeated them to their children, who in turn made them their own. Some people spoke favourably of Venice in their wills, which, unlike petitions, were far more personal documents. Wills were intended for the private world of friends, family, and kin. The language was simple, and any glowing sentiments about Venetian rule were out of place. But even wills could convey nostalgia for the homelands many never saw again. Nicolò Caliga, writing thirty-five years after the fall of Napoli di Romania, expressed such sentiments in his will and added how much he longed to see his homeland ‘return to the authority of the Christians.’⁴⁰ He was not the only one to wish for what had once been. On 24 April 1544 the Greek merchant Zuane Carvuri visited his favourite notary, Agostino Pellestrina, and instructed him to prepare his will. At that stage Carvuri had been in Venice for over twenty years. Along with his family, siblings, and in-laws, he had seen the writing on the wall for Napoli di Romania, his homeland, and left early. But Carvuri had never completely severed his ties with his *patria*. He retained the patronage rights to a small church, San Salvador, and over the years he continued to fulfil his obligations to it. Now he wanted to pass these duties to his four children, and in his will he instructed them to look after the church and pay for its upkeep: ‘And because I have at Napoli di Romania the small church of San Salvatore over which I have *ius patronato*, I recommend it to my children who ought to maintain it with charity’; he then added that ‘if the city of Napoli [di Romania] should ever come into the hand of Christians, I leave to this said church two bells which are being held by messer Nicolò Pelecapa.’⁴¹ There is no doubt to which Christian hand Carvuri wished to see his homeland returned. Like his parents and grand-

⁴⁰ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 344, Nicolò Doglioni, no. 513, 21 July 1579.

⁴¹ ASV, *Notarile Testamenti*, b. 768, Agostino Pellestrina, no. 199, 24 April 1544: ‘Et perche Io havea a Napoli di Romania una giesiola de S. Salvatore de laqual Io ne havea ius patronatus Io la aricomando ali mei fioli liquali la debino subvenire de qualche helemosina ad honore de Dio. Et se venisse mai la città de Napoli in mano de Christiani Io lasso alla predita giesia due campane lequal sono in man de messer Nicolò Pelecapa.’

parents before him, and like other Greek immigrants, Carvuri identified with only one Christian political authority, and it was Venetian.

The Greeks formed a community of people with common characteristics and interests, but they were also part of a world that went beyond their Greek one. The absorption of local language and customs through personal networks like marriage, friendship, and work, and through corporate bodies helped them make the transition from immigrant to settler. Their exposure to Venetians over a very long time made integration easier for them than for foreigners and outsiders.

* * *

What did it mean to be a Greek in sixteenth-century Venice? To the identifier it was a large group of mostly colonial people who spoke the same language and for the most part followed the same rite, but whose customs and traditions were different from Venetian ones. To the identified, being Greek had two levels of meaning: one was the corporate, the public face of a community of people with similar traditions and a common political history; the other level, the more important of the two, was the personal. It marked people by family, kin, place of origin, occupation, class, language, and faith. In short, it named the individual and identified her/his place in the Greek community as well as in the wider Venetian one.

A permanent immigrant community preserves its traditions while adopting the ways and assuming many of the habits and customs of its new home. To survive and remember, it needs to think exclusively to keep alive its history, customs, language, and rituals. It also needs to be inclusive, which it does by accepting the dynamics of the society to which it now belongs. It forms close bonds with the host community through neighbourhood contacts, work, and participation in the rhythms of daily life. One reason immigrant Greeks integrated fairly painlessly was because they knew of Venice before they arrived. They knew it through contact with Venetian officials, merchants, travellers, and others in their *patrie*. The imperial system they lived and worked under gave them a broader perspective, one beyond the *patria*. Confidence was not acquired after they came to Venice but rather in their homelands through associations, contacts, and friendships they created over time. They were urban, mercantile, artisan, and seafaring folk who did not live in isolation from other Mediterranean people. They were well acquainted with difference.

Once in Venice, they retained the Greekness of their *patrie* through family, kin, and friends. At the same time, immigration imposed another level of Greekness, this time a larger, corporate one that went beyond *patria* and rite.

The strength of Greekness was its elasticity and its openness; it was neither moribund nor a narrowly defined concept. In the course of the sixteenth century, it was constantly being redefined to incorporate new arrivals and adjusted to deal with new circumstances. Did Greeks eventually become Greek-speaking Venetians? To the extent that all immigrants eventually assume the identity of their new homelands, yes. While preserving the Greekness of their past through the church and the *scuola*, Greeks simultaneously created a new corporate entity, one that was recognized, respected, and protected by the state. They became Greek-speaking Venetians who fit themselves into a city that was multi-ethnic, multilingual, and multicultural. Being Greek meant being Venetian too. In this sense, Venice was the perfect place to be a Greek outside the Greek-speaking world of the *Stato da Mar*.



Figure 7.1: The Winged Lion of St Mark above the front door of a private home, Monemvasia, Greece. Photo courtesy of John Burke.
(Reproduced in colour on p. xii.)

CONCLUSION

Greek women and men emigrated to Venice for many different reasons. One was the economic opportunities the city offered. Another was the close identification of urban subject people with Venetian authority. The rate of immigration during the sixteenth century strongly indicates that Greeks preferred to live under Venetian rule, whether in their homelands, other Greek-speaking colonies of the *Stato da Mar*, or Venice itself. Work patterns and occupations strongly support the view that state employment was common but not exclusively so. The need to secure their economic well-being first, followed by strong identification with the regime, motivated both refugees and free settlers to emigrate, and, as the imperial capital, Venice was the most attractive destination. Most of the settlers — artisans, mariners, and small-time merchants — already had work-related ties to Venice or, at the very least, had heard about opportunities for employment from others who had been there. In short, people were aware of the benefits and privileges that came with residency in Venice or one of its territories. Greek willingness to go to where the jobs were indicated a confidence about their place in the larger Venetian world. For its part, the state knew very well that without the support of its subject people, it would not have had the resources to govern its overseas territories, man its fleets, fight its wars, or run its many public offices effectively. By rewarding those who worked to protect and defend its territories and contributed to its general prosperity and well-being, the state acknowledged the years of service and the loyalty of all its subjects regardless of where they came from or their class. Mary Neff's explanation on why the state recognized the endeavours of the de' Freschi family also applies to the thousands of commoners who contributed to the prosperity and security of the Republic:

The state took care to reward faithful service with bonuses and additional grants of office. But by encouraging state service, the patrician government was also inviting its subjects to embrace its concerns as their own, mitigating the alienation of the

disenfranchised and focusing their interests psychologically as well as materially on the status quo.¹

In terms of the treatment of its Greek residents, the state succeeded in 'mitigating the alienation of the disenfranchised'.

The Greek community incorporated people united by a common language, history, political tradition, and the immigration experience. This was the corporate image of the community, used by the state and by the Greeks in their dealings with it and with each other. Coexisting alongside the corporate were other, more personal identities defined by family, kin, friends, interests, and work. These identities were fluid and changed according to new circumstances, and they were not always a reflection of the laws that governed social order. Other historians have arrived at similar conclusions. In her work on medieval Venetian Crete, Sally McKee compares government decrees that dictated social organization with accounts of a more personal nature found in notarial archives. The former presented what she terms the 'traditional view of Venetian Crete', one which saw Veneto-Cretan society as two 'fundamentally antagonistic ethnic groups'. Notarial documents, however, presented a more realistic, integrated society. McKee writes:

The problem is how to reconcile the two pictures presented by the different sets of sources, because both are to different degrees valid, and how to explain them in light of the population's (Venetian and Cretan) continued use of the terms like 'Latin' and 'Greek' when it is obvious that the criteria for what defined 'Latin' and 'Greek' had evolved considerably over the first two centuries of Venetian rule. After working with these sources closely for a long time, it became clear to me that the defining features of 'Latin' and 'Greek' were less important, since they changed, than the uses to which the ethnic terms were put and situations in which they were employed.²

Sources consulted throughout this book show that Greeks did not live in isolation from their neighbours, that neither social class nor ethnicity stopped people from working and socializing together. Co-operation and the acceptance of difference was the norm rather than the exception.

This book has focused on Greek corporate and personal identity. It has examined all aspects of daily life, whereas earlier studies focused on religious, confraternal, and mercantile issues. It has looked at the Greek community as a series of smaller communities of regional, occupational, friendship, and family

¹ Neff, 'A Citizen in the Service of the Patrician State', p. 33.

² McKee, *Uncommon Dominion*, p. 169; pages 168–177 analyse the difficulties and potential problems of narrowly defined notions of identity.

groups as well as an association of confraternal and communal brothers and sisters. In doing so, it has expanded the boundaries of Greekness beyond church and *scuola* and into the streets of Castello and beyond. It was always my aim to give voice to the thousands of commoner Greeks who made Venice their home. In doing so, I have shifted the emphasis from the elite classes to the *popolano* majority, and from the cultural and religious world to the social, economic, and personal one.

On a broader scale I hope this study leads to the examination of other subject immigrant communities in Venice and their relationships to each other and to the state. There is a large body of as untapped documentation for further research. The Greek story too is incomplete. There have not been comprehensive studies of Cypriot immigration after 1570, nor Cretan immigration in the seventeenth century. What problems did Cypriots encounter after the 1570–71 wars? Did the drawn-out Cretan and Cypriot wars impact on the community and, if so, how? How did the community absorb Cypriot and then Cretan refugees after these islands became Ottoman? What demands did the new waves of refugees make on the state and on the community? On a broader scale, how did Venetian elites and the state deal with returning patricians and *cittadini originarii* families that had been in Crete and Cyprus for generations? Were their demands for recognition of their rights and entitlements acknowledged? Many of these families had acquired local in-laws, family, and kin as well as Greek habits and customs. How were they seen, as Venetians, as Cretans, as Cypriots, or something else? Why were a small number of Greek families allowed to enter the patriciate in the mid-seventeenth century, and, having done so, did they then cut their ties with their compatriots, or had they done so many, many years before? What motivated a handful of families to apply for patrician status, and on what grounds did a considerable number of Greek elites seek *cittadini originarii* status? What documentation did they need? Did they eventually join the Latin church? How did their new status impact on their relationship with the Greek community and the Greek church? Did they cease being Greek altogether or did they retain some Greek customs and traditions?

Another area that deserves greater scrutiny is the impact of the Inquisition on Greek social and religious life. Many Greek women and men came before this court charged with an array of offences.³ The majority of the accused were Cypriots. Why? Did occupation, class, and ethnicity matter to the court? For example, did the Inquisition single out working men and women more than the well-to-do? Twelve men (but no women) faced charges of ‘Lutheranism’. More

³ ASV, *Santo Ufficio*, Index 303.

Greek women than men were accused of witchcraft. In her work on Venetian working women, Monica Chojnacka refers to the many instances of Greek women appearing before the Inquisition.⁴ Two people were charged with 'Greek schism', but what did this mean? How did fronting the Inquisition court impact on one's life? How did the community respond, or did it? For example, did it offer the accused legal advice or a good lawyer?

Immigrants, refugees, migrant workers, outsiders in general have always been a threat to the status quo. Some societies adopt draconian measures that end up punishing the weakest. Others put in place measures that lead to the eventual incorporation of the immigrant into the host community, so that the 'outsider' becomes the 'insider'. What did Venice do? Did it succeed where our own societies are struggling to find ways to deal with the impact of legal and 'illegal' migration? Whether accidentally or through clever planning, the Venetian Republic managed to deal with its subject people, its Jewish community, and all the other minorities that called Venice home. Can we perhaps learn something from the Venetians?

* * *

Greek immigration into Venice did not stop at the end of the sixteenth century. In some ways, it became more diverse by incorporating Greeks from places outside the *Stato da Mar*. Indeed, the death registers of Sant' Antonin parish for the period 1569–1655 record homelands as diverse as Moldavia, parts of Thrace, and the port cities and towns of the Ottoman Empire and mainland Italy.⁵ The continuous movement of Greeks to Venice indicates that the city remained a favoured destination for those seeking economic and professional opportunities and for personal reasons. It had a reputation for political stability, and its serenity was generally admired. Writing at the end of the fifteenth century, Cardinal Bessarion said that for him Venice was like another Byzantium (*alterum Byzantium*).⁶ Similarly, but probably more poignantly for the Greek-speaking *popolo* of the *Stato da Mar*, Venice too was another homeland, their *altera patria*.

⁴ Chojnacka found that in one given period, Greek women made up nearly two-thirds of the accused immigrants before the Inquisition. She also found a high degree of integration 'mixed with occasional discord' between local and immigrant women. Chojnacka, *Working Women in Early Modern Venice*, pp. 91, 94–95.

⁵ *Gli atti di morte dei Greci*, ed. by Maltezou and Ploumidis, pp. 28, 39, 58.

⁶ *Venice: A Documentary History*, ed. by Chambers and Pullan, p. 358.

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INDEX

- Antoniadi, Sofia: xxii–xxiii, xxii n. 9
 Aretino, Pietro: 56, 59
 Arbel, Benjamin: xiv, 156 n27
 Arsenal: 8–9, 20, 24–25, 56, 61, 70, 71–72, 76, 128
 arsenalotti: 8–9, 62–64, 71–73, 72 n. 21, 146 n. 6, 150
 petitions for work at: 145
 artisans: 2–3, 4 n. 2, 8–9, 16, 21, 25 n. 2, 66–67, 69–74, 76–77, 128
 artists: 73 n. 27, 73–74, 174, 73 n. 27, 174
 guild membership: 69
 in maritime industry: 71–72
 occupations: 67, 70
 painters, *see* madonneri
 tailors: 70–71
 see also madonneri
 awards: 71, 88, 88 n. 69, 143–45, 143 n. 1, 153–55
 female recipients: 147–48
 funding, process and purpose: 144–46
 male recipients: 150–52
 military honours: 156–57
 Monemvasians and Naupliots favoured: 152–53
 refugees from other territories: 155–56
 withdrawal of favours: 154–54
 see also Ufficio delle Rason Vecchie sopra Napolitani et Malvassioti
 Baxon-Palopano family: 71
 Bella di Patrasso: 47, 47 n. 61, 60, 159–60, 163–68
 bequests: 56–57, 63–64, 116–17, 120, 124, 157, 163–68, 166 n. 58, 171–72
 to Greek scuola and church: 116–17, 120, 157, 160, 160 n. 42
 to institutions beyond Venice: 167–68
 to Venetian charities and institutions: 166–68
 Bessarion: 4, 15, 98, 214
 Betti, Andriana: 62–64, 64 n. 106, 91
 book and manuscript trade: 100–03
 Bua Mercurio, *capo dei stratioti*: 44, 52, 107, 107 n. 118, 194
 Alexio: 109
 burial rites, *see* death, funeral and burial rituals
 Byzantium: 3–4, 7, 12, 195 n. 15
 artistic style: 72, 175, 176 n. 81
 Caliga Manoli: 81–82
 Nicolò: 81–82, 207
 Caravella, Giacomo: 57, 57 n. 83, 159, 172
 Dimo and Piero: 76
 Castello (parish and *sestiere*), description: 8–9
 Caterina Corner, Queen of Cyprus: 11, 105 n. 112
 Cathario family: 96–97, 97 n. 91, 98, 151–52
 Cavopenna family: 42, 42 n. 46, 43, 54, 98, 98 n. 94, 118, 174 n. 77
 Census of 1592 – 1594 (*status animarum*): 185–94
 earlier census records: 7 n. 6

- Greek household composition and size:
19 n. 23, 21 n. 27, 23–25, 24 n. 1
- Greek residents by parish: 25–26, 26 n. 5
- children: 46–54
adoptions: 49, 58, 62, 64
average number per family unit: 25
in blended households: 45–51
disobedient children: 48–49
godchildren: 51, 59, 60, 164
illegitimate children: 49, 51–54
orphans: 49
- Chiriaculi, Marina: 32
merchant: 94–95, 94 n. 86
- Chojnacka, Monica: 26 n. 5, 214, 214 n. 4
- Chojnacki, Stanley: xiv, 42 n. 43, 183 n. 1
- Cigara, Zoto: 171–72
- Cinque Savii sopra Napolitani et Malvasiotti*: 153
- Citizens and citizenship: xix, xix n. 3, 7–8, 95, 98 n. 94, 99, 146, 183–84
multiple citizenships: 184
- Civran, Girolamo, interpreter and translator: 99
- Condolignoti, Pietro: 80, 85–87, 86 n. 62, 89
death and burial: 159
- Contarini, Antonio, Venetian patriarch (1508–24): 125–28
- Coron: xvi, 11, 13–14, 18–19, 32, 155
- Council of Florence (1439): 114–15
defines uniates: 125–29
Emperor John VIII Paleologos at: 115
- Council of Trent: 35, 35 n. 26
Venetian refusal to implement decrees of: 132–34, 137, 138, 142
- Crete: 11–13, 13 n. 13, 16–19, 16 n. 19, 32–33, 72–73, 72 n. 23, 72 n. 24, 110, 153, n. 22, 155, 202, 204 n. 31, 212–13
- Cretan artistic style: 73, 73 n. 23
- Curcumeli, Andrea: 80, 83–84, 85, 86–88, 87 n. 68, 89, 174
- Cuscutelli family: 205–07
- Cuvli family: 29, 29 n. 11, 48, 88–90, 118, 139 n. 36, 160 n. 42, 193
Andronico di Canachi: 39, 46, 139 n. 46
Canachi: 87–88, 154
Cuvli-Vergi rivalry: 41, 130
Isabetta d' Andronico: 56–57, 60, 157 n. 32
marriages: 39, 46, 54–55, 89
mercantile activities: 46, 56–57, 87–89, 92 n. 79, 102, 104
Nicolò di Canachi: 51, 53, 161, 165
Cyprus and Cypriots: xxii, 11–12, 15, 18, 32–33, 79–80
compensation for immigrants and refugees: 155–56
Ottoman wars and takeover: 15, 16, 18–19, 79–80, 147, 155
stratioti in: 67, 105, 108–09
turcopoli: 67, 67 n. 6
Venetian settlers in: 33
- Darmario, Andrea, copyist, book and manuscript merchant: 19 n. 22, 102–03
- Davis, Robert: 21, 21 n. 26, 67 n. 5, 72 n. 21, 145 n. 4, 146 n. 6
- death, burial, and funeral rituals: 157–63, 158, 160
- della Vigna, Andrea: 81
- Dondi, Pretiosa: 51–52, 59
- Doumanis, Nicholas: xxii n. 8
- dowries: 29 n. 11, 35 n. 26, 37–40, 38 n. 33, 42, 82, 94, 164, 172
as a form of public welfare: 144–45
gifts to orphans and poor girls: 163–64
refugee women's dowries: 149–50
stratioti women's dowries: 105–06, 109
working class dowries: 37–40
- Ecumenical Patriarch at Constantinople: xxiv, 124–25
corresponds with Protestant theologians: 137
interference in Trizento scandal: 129–30
relationship with San Giorgio dei Greci: 132–33, 138–42
- Elia di Nicolò: xix
- Eparco, Antonio: 17, 32, 101, 103
Andriana: 32
Zorzi: 86
- Eugenia da Candia: 61
- Eugenico family
di Napoli di Romania: 31–32
da Negroponte: 48, 59, 151, 152, 152 n. 17
- families: xvii, xxvi, 15–17, 22, 25–30, 55
elite families: 41–43
family tensions: 44–51
see also households, marriage

Fedalto, Giorgio: 127, 128 n. 28
 Filippa da Napoli di Romania: 168
 Fondachi (exchange houses):
 Fondaco dei Tedeschi: 9
 Fondaco dei Turchi: 9, 28, 97, 98, 100
 Fontana, Zuana: 148–50
 Francesco da Cipro: 34, 45, 62–64, 91
 Frangopulo, Giacomo: 80–82
 friends and friendship: 17, 22, 26, 33–34,
 47, 55–62
 funerals, *see under* death, burial, and funeral
 rituals

Galeazzo da Corfu: 62
 Glinzouni, Manoli: 102–03
 Gratini, Bishop of Amelia, papal nuncio in
 Venice: 195–97
 Greeks in Venice: xxiii, 3–4, 5, 8–10, 12–13,
 15–16, 19–22, 24–26, 66, 146–47
 definitions and distinctions: 15–17
 diversity among: 17–18
 economic status of majority: 119
 homelands: 16–17
 households: 21–30
 immigration and immigrants: xvii, xx,
 xxiii, xxv, 4, 10, 15, 17–18, 22, 27,
 30, 31, 42, 43, 45–46, 55, 62, 64, 66,
 80, 113
 language retention over time: 199–201
 marriage preferences: 32–33
 nuns and monks: 25, 138 n. 44, 167,
 171–72
 population of: 19, 19 n. 23, 20–22,
 21 n. 27, 23–24, 30, 66
 priests: 35, 36, 62, 116, 120, 128, 131–32,
 136, 138, 138 n. 44, 141, 169, 172
 refugees: xvii–xix, 14–17, 23–30
 views of the *Serenissima*: 204–09
 see also awards, petitions
 guilds: 56, 63, 69, 70 n. 14, 72 n. 21, 73,
 73 n. 25, 76, 117, 120
 guild scuole: 69, 70 n. 14

Hacke, Daniela: 26 n. 5
 historiography: xx–xxiv
 nationalist school xxi–xxiii, 114–15

icon: 72, 74, 100, 128–30
 Manessi icon: 175–76, 176 n. 81,
 176 n. 83, 177, 203 n. 29

Mormori icon: 178–79
 see also madonneri
 identity: xxiv–xxv, 183–85, 189, 192–94,
 197–98, 202–04
 corporate identity: 194–97, 203–04
 language and identity: 200–02
 personal identity: 198–200
 Inquisition court: 213–14, 214 n. 4
 Ionian Islands: xxiii, 12, 17, 18, 98, 110
 Isidore: 114–16, 125

Jews: xx, 9, 10, 97, 123, 133, 197, 197 n. 19
 the Ghetto: 9, 34, 96–97, 97 n. 91

Lane, Frederic: 21, 65 n. 1
 Litino, Francesco di Demetri: 21, 28, 45, 49,
 49 n. 66, 54, 82, 97, 181
 Litino Margarita, broker: 93
 Lombardo, Santo architect of San Giorgio
 dei Greci: 174

madonneri (Cretan icon painters): 72–73
 Mackenney, Richard: 69 n. 10, 73 n. 25,
 145 n. 4

Malici, Giacomo: 46, 52, 53
 Malkiel, David: 10
 Manolesso, Pietro: 39, 202, 202 n. 26
 Maraveglia, Cecilia, prioress of the
 Lazaretto: 96
 mariners: 21–22, 24–25, 66–67, 74–79
 occupational hazards of occupation:
 78–79
 privileges: 76–77
 marriage: 31–47, 33, 42, 43–44, 54–55
 ceremonies and rituals: 35–40
 Eastern and Latin rites: 35–37, 35 n. 26
 endogamy: 32–34
 exogamy: 54–55
 remarriage: 44–47

Martinengo family: 28, 93, 193
 Mavroidi, Fani: 119 n. 8, 202 n. 25
 McKee, Sally: 13 n. 34 n. 25, 212, 212 n. 2
 Membre, Michiel *dragomano*: 99–100,
 100 n. 99, 193
 merchants and mercantile trade: 17, 20, 40,
 65 n. 1, 66–67, 76, 78, 79–82, 84–89
 brokers: 92–93
 mercantile networks: 79–83
 military, *see* stratioti

- Mitrofanis, Bishop of Caesarea: 132–33
- Modon: xxii, 11, 13–14, 18, 19, 109, 155
- Monemvasia and Monemvasians: 11, 17–19, 68, 74, 118, 136 n. 41, 147–48, 205–06
- awards, favours and privileges to refugees: 148 n. 9, 152–53, 152 n. 19, 155–56, 199
- Mueller, Reinhold: 183
- Mussuro, Marco: 98–99, 101
- Myth of Venice: xxvi, 6 n. 5, 10, 146, 185, 204–05
- Napoli di Romania: 11, 15, 18, 32, 147–48, 148 n. 9, 152–55, 152 n. 19, 199, 204–05, 205 n. 33
- community cohesiveness: 32–33, 88–89
- dominate Greek scuola offices: 118–19
- Nassin family: 80, 95–98, 148, 164–65
- Neff, Mary: 211–12
- Notara, Anna: 128–29, 129 n. 30, 175, 175 ns. 78–79, 184, 195 n. 15
- Lucas Notara, *megas dux*: 128–29, 129 n. 30, 184
- Officio delle Rason Vecchie sopra Napolitani et Malvassioti*: 153, 155–56
- Ottomans: xxiii n. 11, 13–14, 16–19, 16 n. 19, 68 n. 8, 105, 115, 137, 139–40, 155
- Paleologo family
- Demetri di Teodoro, *capo dei stratioti*: 43–44, 105, 156, 179, 179 n. 89, 180
- Paleologo gospel book: 179–80
- Speranza 147–48, 151
- Teodoro di Paolo, *capo dei stratioti*, interpreter and diplomat: 43, 49, 54, 99, 123–24, 126, 161–62
- Pardos, Antonios: xxiv, 26, 119 n. 8, 202 n. 25
- patronage: 73–74, 170–72, 174–75, 175 ns. 78–79, 176, 179, 193, 207
- beyond Venice: 167
- of printing and publishing houses: 101–02
- petitions (*suppliche*): 13 n. 14, 61, 67–69, 77, 89, 95–97, 100 n. 109, 115, 122–23, 143–47, 143 n. 1, 145 n. 4, 146 n. 6
- to establish Greek rite church: 122–23
- to establish a Greek scuola: 117–18
- men's petitions: 150–51
- San Biagio chapel: 115
- women's petitions: 147–50
- Ploumidis, Georghios: xxiv, 19, 19 n. 23, 26
- printers and publishers: xxi, 40, 66, 100–02, 100 n. 100, 101–02, 102–03, 104, 175
- investors in printing houses: 84, 88–89, 102, 104, 175
- professionals: 67, 88, 95–100
- dragomani* (interpreters of Turkish language): 98–100
- Ghetto guardians: 96–99; *see also* Jews, Ghetto
- lazaretti* priors: 95–96
- teachers: 101, 156
- Prothimo Paleologina, Maria: 59, 198–99, 199 n. 20
- Querini, Girolamo, Venetian patriarch (1524–54): 125–29, 132
- Ram, Alessandro: 181
- Romano, Dennis: xiv, 30
- Samariari, Giacomo: 17, 51, 57, 78, 170
- bequests: 168–71
- family and friends: 85–87, 89
- funeral: 161, 169–70
- house inventory: 84–85, 85 n. 57, 104
- mercantile activities: 20, 84–85, 85 n. 57
- Samariari, Marco: 80–81, 84, 102
- San Biagio chapel: 115–17, 120–22, 126, 158, 162, 189 n. 6, 198
- Greek scuola meets in: 117
- Greek cemetery at: 158
- San Biagio parish: 20, 189 n. 6, 194
- San Giorgio dei Greci: 20, 122, 128–34, 172–74
- doctrinal differences between Eastern and Latin churches: 113–114, 116, 120, 125
- Ecumenical patriarchate's involvement in: 124–25, 130, 132–33
- Metropolitan of Filadelfia: 134–36
- petition for Greek rite church: 120–22
- problems and resolutions: 122–34
- the Trizento Affair: 128–30
- see also* Contarini, Antonio; Querini, Girolamo; Mitrofanis; Seviro

- Sanuto, Marin: 43, 44, 52, 106, 107 n. 118, 108, 108 n. 122, 126, 127, 161–62, 194, 205 n. 33, 206
- Scuola di San Nicolò dei Greci: xx–xxii, 15, 22, 40, 47 n. 61, 73 n. 26, 116–21, 130, 139, 139 n. 46, 141, 160, 162–63, 165–66, 169–70, 171–72, 202–03, 206, 206 n. 39, 209
- account books: 157, 159, 160
- duties and responsibilities: 120
- finances: 166, 166 n. 58
- income: 120
- membership: 118–20
- patron saint: 117, 120
- petition to establish: 117–18
- tensions and disagreements: 130–31, 200
- scuole, *see* Venice
- Seguro family of Zante: 44 n. 49, 83, 87, 89, 174 n. 77
- Sella, Domenico: 65 n. 1
- servants: 27–29, 56–57, 59, 66–67, 83, 90–91
- Servo, Leonino patron of Gabriel Sevro: 135–36
- Sevasto, Nicolò: 31–32
- Sevro, Gabriel, Metropolitan of Filadelfia: 134–41
- Banca support for Sevro: 138–39
- Singlitico, Eugenio: 180
- Soffianò, Manoli: xix
- Spandounes family: 42
- stratioti* and *capi dei stratioti*: xxi, 12, 40–44, 67, 104–10, 104 n. 111, 106–08, 109–10, 122–23, 152 n. 19
- Albanian - Greek antagonism: 106–07
- awards, benefits, gifts to: 105–06, 109–10, 156–57
- costs of: 108–09
- different from *condottieri*: 104–05
- qualities: 107
- social relations: 55, 62
- Theotokopoulos, Domenikos (El Greco): 73
- Trizento Affair: 128–32
- turcopoli, *see* Cyprus
- Uniates: 116, 125
- definition: 114
- Vacalopoulos, Apostolos: 19, 19 n. 22
- Venice: xvii, xviii, 5–10, 7 n. 6, 8 n. 9, 11–14, 17–18, 22, 23, 30, 33, 36, 42, 43, 65–66, 65 n. 1, 69, 75, 100, 104–06, 124–25, 132–34, 183–85, 194, 204
- award and petitioning system: 143–45, 146
- foreign communities in: xx, 9–10
- foreign scuole in: 9, 10, 21
- imperial subjects, status of: xix, 12–13, 80
- scuole: 9–10, 56, 116–17, 120, 130–31, 195, 201, 203, 206 n. 39
- social structure: 7–8
- Venice and Byzantium: 3–4
- Vergi family: 41, 51, 54, 80–84, 87–89, 130
- Cuvli-Vergi rivalry, *see* Cuvli family
- Demetri Vergi: 167, 172
- Mathio Vergi: 130
- Wright, Diana: 12 n. 12, 42 n. 46, 98 n. 94, 152 n. 19
- women: 24, 26, 29, 31–32, 33, 34 n. 25, 37–38, 40, 43, 45, 55, 90, 92, 96, 144, 162, 167, 198, 200, 201
- friendships: 58–59, 60–61
- living arrangements: 24, 26, 26 n. 5, 29
- nuns: 25, 138 n. 44, 167, 171–72
- occupations: 28, 67, 80–81, 90–95
- petitions and awards: 147–50
- widows: 24–27, 45, 76–77
- see also* dowries, marriage
- Zachona, Stamati: 68–69, 69 n. 9, 205
- Zorzi: 67–68
- Zimbletto, Anastasia, broker: 93–94
- Clients: 93
- Zorattini, Pier Cesare Ioly: 197, 197 n. 19

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